



CHINA THE GOOD?

Maurice Strong argues that the Western media, and Maclean's, have it all wrong P.22

MACLEAN'S

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WE'RE GETTING

GOUGED

Canadians are STILL paying more
than Americans for everything from
lip balm to luxury cars P.32



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IAN MCKLESS
"Could it be that McCain wants to favour his home the idea that Obama is suddenly cornered by turning his own campaign into a Canadian anti-terror?" macleans.ca/anti



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Cyndee C.

TV GUIDANCE
"I think I speak for all of us when I say that Flare's good Thursday ratings on CTV are a major foreign-policy triumph for the entire nation!" macleans.ca/television

READER COMMENT OF THE WEEK

"The PQ should just be grateful that Paul McCartney doesn't buy the entire province and turn Quebec City into a soul sanctuary!"
—Kevin Hart, @KevinHart on Twitter

WEB POLL RESULTS

If you could, how would you vote in the U.S. election this November?



THIS WEEK'S POLL: macleans.ca/poll

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TOP STORIES THIS WEEK

The end of al-Qaeda?

Some recent high-profile defections have left experts wondering if the terrorist group is fading

Go for gold

Take the Olympic torch and see how you stack up against your fellow readers.

Comparison shopping

Our full chart of U.S.-Canadian price differences might make you angry

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Bell cheering just got better





'Conrad Black is in jail because he has never tempered his ego with an ounce of humility'

TAKING A FLIER

THANK YOU for your article on the challenges of air travel ("Why air travel is hell," *Business*, July 28). My wife and I took a trip a few weeks ago that was most frustrating. When we arrived at the Air Canada ticket counter at the Ottawa airport, we were asked to print our own boarding passes, which wasted a lot of time. On the way home, we were required to obtain our own baggage tags from a computer, which was very confusing—over the agent helping us had trouble. After attaching the tags, we had to put the baggage on the conveyor belt ourselves. I am doing all of this extra work, and yet the company charged me for a pillow. These are not friendly sales.

Steve Calvert, Niagara, Ont.

HEAVING IN HELL I beg to differ. My family and I recently returned from Dubai and our overall experience was nothing but positive. We avoided that overrated and expensive mansueta of an airport in Toronto and instead landed through John C. Munroe Airport in Hamilton and enjoyed a very comfortable non-stop flight with Flyglobe Express NA 822222.

Henny Swierenga, Smithville, Ont.

SO AIRLINES are looking for ways to get rid of some weight and save on fuel costs? (I have an idea. Get rid of flight attendants on short flights altogether.) The service they provide is often the worst part of the flight. If you can't go on board without a drink of water or a coffee you shouldn't be flying anyway. The mad rush they go to get you out of the plane is often the worst part of the flight. If you want to go up and go to the bathroom, the flight attendants are in your way, though they always make you feel like it's your choice to sit there. Airline should stop pretending to make flying glamorous.

Greg Campbell, Regina

EIGHTY-THOUSAND gallons of gasoline is fuel for an airliner? It's enough to make me wonder if the nostalgia over the golden age of travel is misplaced. What about the golden age of train travel? The train is a huge and neglected part of Canada's heritage. But last time I joined a service run from Toronto to Vancouver, the train was by far the most expensive way of going. If only trains were more affordable and more comfortable. They

are already more environmentally responsible. It seems to me that with \$2,000 a gallon of fuel you could probably transport the entire population of a city, Chalkville, B.C., to Toronto and back again by train.

David Lee, Hamilton

YOUR STORY said that neither Air Canada nor Westjet would provide data on its flight performance. As part of each quarter's financial results, Westjet provides the three key measures of an airline's operational success: on-time performance (the percentage of flights that arrived within 15 minutes of



their scheduled arrival time), completion rate (the percentage of flights the airline completed within the indicated time period), and baggage ratio (the number of bags per 1,000 travellers that did not arrive on the same flight). In the name of transparency, here are Westjet's "Big Three" for the second quarter of 2008: on-time performance: 84.1 per cent; completion rate: 99.9 per cent; and baggage ratio: 3.33 per cent. Get your rights listed to drive the airline industry. When an airline does it right, we should appreciate your readers knowing the full story.

Richard Harrison, Vice-President, Culture and Communications, Westjet, Calgary

ANIEL'S WITCH HUT

IN WRITING ABOUT Conrad Black's trial, Rebecca Arnold aptly described her husband's ordeal and her own witch hunt ("This is

hush-hush," *Justice*, August 4). The Black's trial and assets were stolen outright by the debate that somehow convinced his own counsel out of 15 June? A joke indeed. Barbara's husband was convicted by juries. In an historical irony, a rich man has been denied justice.

Nancy Roberts, Brockville, Ont.

ALL ALRIGHT, Barbara Arnold lives with grace and spirit, all the more difficult since her content is so personal. Her courage is something. Her question is consistent: where is the voice of outrage over Conrad Black's trial? Not just at the wrong end of the American justice system, but in the larger forum of public opinion, a specifically here in Canada? If we as a nation are willing to pledge Canadian support for those who adopt or promote their citizenship in a function of citizenship, why are we not extending that to someone who has contributed profoundly to Canadian society? Where is the champion of this cause? I wonder who our government is doing when a significant former citizen, a holder of high national and international honours, is wrongfully imprisoned in another country? It's time for our government to put pressure on this issue and pledge support where it is deserved.

Peter Kleinschmidt, Mississauga, Ont.

THE PLACEMENT of Barbara Arnold's verdicts in the Justice section is challenging, even to the most objective of readers. What is blatantly clear to everyone is that if you pay no attention to a court order and you disturb a document's integrity and the evidence presented, you are obstructing justice. There is no question Conrad Black did just that. Secondly, appellate arguments are never (in Canada or in the U.S.) an opportunity to retry cases. They are only for issues on appeal that are ripe for judicial review, not just your discontent at the result.

Brendy Giesler, Springfield, Ont.

OKAY, I read the article and sense of it was horrible, but who was that guy, with a respectable membership to Canada, stealing documents and why was he doing it?

Mary Bailey, St. Catharines, Ont.

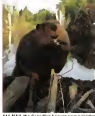
CONRAD BLACK is in jail only not because of any true criminal offence, but because

he has never tempered his ego with an ounce of humility. When did America (and Canada for that matter) develop such justice for the wealthy, corrupt and powerful prick? It's a shame. But for Lord Black and our society.

Melanie Riemer, Regina

AXE MEN RULE!

KATE KENNEDY BRIGGS in her article about the death of pirate sales ("It's official: the pirate sale is dead," *Music*, July 28). Guitar sales are on the rise. In fact, in the top 40 music, but if your only source of music is iTunes, you are severely depriving yourself of some fantastic music. Bands like Dream



ALL MAIL the Canadian beaver, says a reader

Thomson, Opeth and Three are unbelievable musicianship with an elegant simplicity, yet they are repeatedly convicted for self-indulgent noise and fills, an it's a shame to usually pay time and effort into their craft. Why ask skilled musicians like John Petrucci and Paul Gilbert to apologise for (pay?) actually knowing how to play their instruments? I doubt this attitude prevails among fans of classical music, ballet, or even sports—would you expect anyone to perform beneath their ability?

Lisa Fennell, Whistler, Ont.

HEY! METAL, whether it's death, thrash or speed, was one type of guitar solo played. Whether to complement the music or make noise or give a totally chaotic and dark feeling, the metalhead always survives in the world of heavy-metal music.

Daniel Pelletier, Orleans, Ont.

PRaise FOR AN IMAM

WOW! I just finished reading Maclean's interview with Syed Sakhawud, the imam who filed a human rights complaint against Elton John for publishing the gay news and Dan

ids cartoon (interview, July 28). The turnout and the support on human rights commissions after complaints were filed against him was one of the greatest of hope about the whole human rights commission issue. If people would actually take the time to think rationally about issues and discuss them before giving to aggressively offended, we wouldn't be in the mess we are today. As a secular Canadian, I really didn't understand what all the fuss is about. Open and honest dialogue about controversial issues is always the better alternative. The minister government or God forbid, lawyers—get involved, we become polarized into opposing camps. Kudos to Sakhawud for having the courage to admit he was wrong.

Gerry Mackay, Guelph, Ont.

I'M FINDING MYSELF thinking that I might actually be able to relate to Calgary imam Syed Sakhawud when he says human rights commissions are not for dispute about freedom of speech. Half-joking, or whatever the equivalent Muslim word is. Maybe he could share some notes with the crew that gave your Mark Steyn a few unanswered sex questions.

The Monk, Vancouver

BEAVERS ON THE MARCH

NATIONAL PRIDE invaded me and my hand went over my heart when I read Maclean's story about Canadian beavers championing their way across Russia ("Ivan, what's that saying about?" *Nature*, July 28). Our amphibious little rodents are carrying a legacy worthy of us putting them on our medals. I am sure it is not many for the Bears, Russians and Argentinians, but it does make our beavers sit the best. All hail the mighty Canadian beaver and its conqueror of the world.

Glen Davis, Carleton Place, Ont.

THANK YOU for the article on the peppy Canadian beaver championing Moscow. Do you think they've come up? All over the world Canada meet in clandestine centers plotting how we can take over the world using beavers. Please see: Moscow and Argentina. Please see: Washington, London and Madrid. After that, the moon descending. Please then we flip the flag. Invaders of Canada great and place them in downtown parks in foreign cities. Soviet Canadian centre will be on my mind. Today, the Great White North, tomorrow the world!

Gwen Thwaites, London, Ont.

BARENKAND SUPPORT

THANK YOU to Nicholas Kohler and Cathy Galt for the well-balanced article on singer

Steven Page's return on drug charges ("Barrenkand Music," *Profile*, Aug. 4). I have been a Barrenkand fan for many years. I think that in a society we are ignoring too much from our entertainers. We are so quick to judge their beliefs and act shocked at their beliefs. We are really happy that your article, instead of bashing Page, presented the facts along with entertainment from rational people including his lifelong friend. Instead of judging others, it's time for us all to look inward and find some compassion, empathy and forgiveness.

Kelly Winkowski, Guelph, Ont.

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COMPILED BY BRIAN FETTER

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LAST WEEK'S BESTSELLERS



'Mamma Mia!' is sleazy? Thank goodness all this moral turpitude was happening in Greece.'

I WAS QUITE SHOCKED to see the Steven Page scandal on your cover this week. Was there not any gayfire news you could have run instead? No, I am a long-time Illustrated Ladies fan and I was shocked about the news, but in my opinion, it's not headline news. Everyone slips.

Nana Anna Gualtieri, Ott

I SHOULD NOT have been surprised when I returned Maclean's from my post office box and found the land cover's promise of very curative schadenfreude gleam over Steven Page's misadventure. Talk about a dog-bitten man story—a rock star found with illicit drugs. Page should be given credit for maintaining his dignity for as long as he has while living in the fishbowl of pop-musician that our society demands of creative souls. We should celebrate his creativity and recognize that, to borrow a phrase, he's been hurt for the good of God go it. Keep following your muse, Steven.

Jan Macgregor, Clinton, Ont

SEX REGISTRY FLAWS

MICHAEL PROSCALANO'S ARTICLE on the national sex offender registry (NSOR) in right-on is a seriously flawed and ineffective law enforcement tool ("Taking the handcuffs off to keep track of sex offenders," *Nationalist*, July 28). In March, after reading Proscalo's Jan. 14 cover story on this issue, our office wrote to Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day to express our concerns about the effectiveness of the NSOR. One of the issues we raised was the failure of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to alert the RCMP when registered sex offenders were released from prison.

Day replied and assured us that the government is taking appropriate steps to improve the NSOR and affirmed what there is now as administrative agreement between the CSC and the RCMP to share information on releases of offenders. While this is a step forward, more needs to be done as many dangerous convicted criminals are too easily able to avoid registering on the NSOR. Our office will continue to pursue this matter until the NSOR is functioning efficiently, allowing authorities to properly keep track of dangerous convicted criminals and reduce further incidents.

Steve Sullivan, National Ombudsman for Victims of Crime, Ottawa

MAMMA MIA! AND MORALS

SO THE MOVIE *Mamma Mia!* is an unusually playful attack on family values ("My mother slept around. His too!" Plan, July 28)? The musical's Abba rhythms frame and justify a "sleazy plot" of "parental abandon, incest and promiscuity" as "wholesome" family entertainment? May it further fan the flames of moral anarchy? The movie's wedding scene message is even more repulsive.



WEB EXCLUSIVE: too much from our entertainment

while they're working, struggling, single mother has just as good, or an even greater, right to give a daughter away than any dad, parent or relative. Thank goodness all this moral turpitude was happening in Greece.

Eric Redway, Toronto

IT IS INTERESTING that Joanne's Whimsical article adapts the transfer stance in the review of *Mamma Mia!* at a time when literary Mograder and abortion are controversial. Is it the threat of having a child out of wedlock, as opposed to abortion, that offends, or the numerous sexual partners angle? Is Meryl Streep's character altogether too happy about the situation when she should come to a bad or at least less than optimal? Neither male sexual promiscuity nor violence has ever been a problem in dramas, comedies or musicals, and while this latter category has little appeal for me, I find the double standard hypocritical, retrograde and boring.

Doris Wrench Zinder, St. Albert, Alta.

TOOTHsome READING

AS A TEENAGE GIL, I, unlike Brian Bethune, did not find Stephen Meyer's novel *Twilight* in the least bit spellbinding ("Love at first bite," *Books*, July 28). In his story about Meyer's bestselling series of teen vampire novels, Bethune writes that "it's what's underneath, the age-old crisis of growing up, of trying to grasp who you are and what do I have to offer, that book readers and make them want to live in the authors' imaginary worlds." I must say that I would not want to live in a cookie-cutter romantic novel, with bland, two-dimensional characters such as a heroine who might as well be a Disney princess and a hero who has as much personality and spark as the prince in *Snow White*. *Twilight* does not offer young females a positive and realistic role model. Bella is a beautiful, helpless princess, who is portrayed as the quintessential dumb blond. Is this what we as adolescent females want to aspire to? In incidents where she is faced with attacks, she does very little to defend herself and prefers to allow her vampire boyfriend to save her. What does a spectacular trophy get her to offer the world? Nothing! So, if they're looking for a good vampire book or a good solid, gritty, realistic novel with strong characters and real bite, I would advise your readers to look elsewhere.

Roselynn, East St. Paul, Alta.

IN PASSING

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, 89, author of the 1968 novel *The Last Days of Ivan Gromov*, he was killed in a car accident on his way to a political rally, bringing the word "god" into the global lexicon. He was a Nobel Prize for his literary work but faded after the end of the Soviet Union, at one point presenting a TV talk show that was cancelled for lack of viewers.

Randy Powell, 47, molecular biologist, science professor, he was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer in 2007. For his last lecture, he gave an inspirational talk on the importance of pursuing one's passion that became a global sensation last year on YouTube.

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7 DAYS

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF JASON BAY

The all-star jockey from Trid, B.C., woke up Thursday morning a member of the fan-placed Pittsburgh Pirates. By 4:45 a.m. he was the new left fielder for the defending champion Boston Red Sox, who orchestrated a major three-way trade that spelled the end of Manny Ramirez's rocky reign in Beantown. Bay, 29, did not disappoint the Fenway faithful. In his Friday night debut, he scored the winning run, and on Saturday he scratched his first homer over the famous Green Monster.

Good news

Barack-track

By Tuesday, the price of oil had fallen to \$119 per barrel—too high to bring much relief to drivers, yet still a touching measure of the ailing U.S. economy. So Barack Obama was right this week to raise his aspiration to domestic offshore drilling, along with the idea of dipping into the American oil reserve, to ease prices at the pump. Soaring fuel costs have played a key role in driving the U.S. economy toward recession, and while Obama will wear the white oval for his term, let's merely hoping to hold fire. Electric cars are fine in theory, but without jobs to pay for them—and with the trade in values of SUVs doubling by the day—we all need some time to adjust. A short-term solution is justified, and wise.

Mind over marriage

In the previous issue of *Maclean's*, Harvard University professor Mark O'Connell explained why marriage, though difficult at times, is worth the effort—both a married and economically married couples, he said, are a

FACE OF THE WEEK



OLHOF OUT Under investigation for bribery, Intel's Prince Minister Chad Olhof announces his resignation, effective next month.

Small world after all

Football fans, brace yourselves. According to a new study, Microsoft-backed study of current managing (GM) net works, researchers have proven that all human beings are indeed only six degrees of separation—4.6 degrees to be precise—from Hollywood hands Kevin Bacon. In fact, no GM were more than 4.6 links away from any other in a chain of personal contacts. Here it proved that as technology expands its reach, the world gets smaller. Unfortunately for Kevin Bacon, it gets smaller, too.

Money Pitt (& Jolie)

Spending of creepy film, you're bound to see a few in front of the newsmen this week, getting their fill of the never before seen Brad Pitt and the latest cover of *People*. The magazine paid millions of dollars for the exclusive photo, and the priced person has been promised to donate

positive funds for society. They reduce poverty, protect low child and low-income families around the world. But if you're still not convinced that a wedding is for you, here's another perk: courage in good for the better. According to social researchers, living with a spouse decreases your risk of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. In fact, people who never marry and live alone are twice as likely to develop dementia, and those who divorce in middle age face three times the risk. So cherish your partner. They may be your cat, but not necessarily to the max.

Bad news

A brutal idea

The article that claimed the lives of 10 police officers in northern China may be little to disrupt the Beijing Olympics, but it has placed a permanent stain on the cause of human rights in the region. With the eyes of the world on China, the assault has now left evidence to Beijing's dubious claim of human rights in the region. The government has said the police officers were involved in a riot against the police. Meanwhile, after (illegally) tearing up a large crowd in Montreal, the punk rock band Iggy Pop and his band, the Stooges, had all their equipment stolen from under their noses. Small consolation: as long as Iggy won't be playing with Céline Dion any more.

Pop go the Plains

Workers tore up large sections of Western Canada's oil fields in Alberta in preparation for the Calgary Stampede later this month. Organizers must the historic site, where the Stampede debuted the French 1770, will be replaced to its natural state in time for the Stampede. Meanwhile, after (illegally) tearing up a large crowd in Montreal, the punk rock band Iggy Pop and his band, the Stooges, had all their equipment stolen from under their noses. Small consolation: as long as Iggy won't be playing with Céline Dion any more.

Apply brakes now

News of a man stabbing and decapitating a fellow passenger on a Greyhound bus was truly appalling, so calls for security measures on the vehicle—such as equipping drivers with police batons—were predictable. We suggest a more far-reaching, and proactive, measure. Recent accounts indicate that the unprovoked attack on 24-year-old Tim McLean on the bus was a case of a man who was really disturbed. Indeed, the man arrested for the killing, Vincent Whelan, 34, was charged for psychiatric testing after pleading during a court appearance to be put to death himself. No doubt Greyhound drivers will all manner of weapons in the course of their work. But arming drivers to do face cops, or turn up their vehicles into killing fortresses, will make their jobs harder while doing nothing to protect passengers from such bleak occurrences. ■

MITCHEL RAPHAEL ON MCCAIN'S INVITE TO MAY AND THE MP WHO OUTWRITES DANIELLE STEEL

THE MP WHO WRITES BOOKS YOU'LL NEVER GET TO READ

London, Ont. Liberal MP Glen Pearson has his own underground literary industry, with such a prolific output he could give Danielle Steel a run for her money. For his own children, he has written numerous kids' books, including *The First Reunion: Two Mothers*, which is about a girl who lost her mother to a land mine. It's based on the experience of his daughter, Abbie May. One of these siblings he adopted from India. Adult novels he's written have themes such as the environment and China. But don't look for Pearson's books in bookstores. Very limited editions are circulated among family and friends. He gets his books bound in leather and never tried to get any of them published. "I don't even worry about that," says the MP. "I don't think I am that good a writer." Writing books, he told *Capital Diary*, "is a great way to keep learning." He recently wrote a child poverty advocate who owned a man fiction book. He wrote in 1997 on social justice. Pearson's wife had given it to her when they were both working at a London food bank. In 1992, Jean Chretien sent one of his books about citizenship as an example of how politics needs some public participation. One of his latest books is about for sale. And Ignatieu deputy leader Michael Ignatieu is supposed to be writing the introduction. "He saw it on my desk one day. He was looking at it when I went out to make a phone call."

plan goes between the two books. According to his wife, Lee-Anne McKee, the words about Ignatieu's deputy leader Michael Ignatieu is supposed to be writing the introduction. "He saw it on my desk one day. He was looking at it when I went out to make a phone call."

JORIN MCCAIN HAS A FEELING SHE'D BE 'A VERY INTERESTING COMPANION'

Former Green leader Jim Harris held a party fundraiser in his new Toronto home, where guests



ELIZABETH MAY in her second-hand outfit, with party host Jim Harris (top left), Ontario Minister Peter MacKay (top right), MP (left) and Glen Pearson (center left), Laurence Harper (center right), (bottom) Michael Ignatieu and the daughter Christina Gilles

came out on his next visit to the party. But McCain, "I have a feeling you'd be a very interesting companion."

PETER MACKEY AND ELIZABETH MAY TAKE PART IN NOVA SCOTIA FERTILITY RITES

Delaware Minister Peter MacKay and Green Leader Elizabeth May are appearing off in Nova Scotia at the Prince County Dragon Boat Festival. While both have

risers, this is the first time they have had their own boat. MacKay's Green Green Green Green Aug. 9. The festival notes "Dragon boat racing began in southern China 1,500 years ago as a fertility rite performed to ensure bountiful crops."

THE PARTYING SWEDEN IS MOVING ON

One of Ottawa's top social networkers, Christina Gilles, is leaving the capital. Her husband, who works for Foreign Affairs, has been assigned to Foreign Affairs, a Swedish who arrived in Canada 1996, has been involved in numerous gala events and is well-known for connecting people, including Sweden's ambassador to Canada, Ingrid Thorsell, with others on the Ottawa cultural scene. In recent days Gilles's outgoing and lively career is very "Swedish" but it's not Swedish they are on-Swedish in Sweden. It is a compliment. "Though the ambassador then added that Gilles's "entrepreneurial and efficiency qualities were very Swedish." Gilles's debut fundraiser in Ottawa was called "I'll be home for Christmas" she brought social looks to the Plaines Chaplains Library to talk about their experience. She plans to come back to Ottawa for one event she recently co-chaired, the Ottawa Human Rights Fair, but, when her company chairman is Laurence Harper. "She's heads on too," notes Gilles of the Prime Minister's wife. "She walks from table to table, which is a very North American thing to do. In Europe, people wouldn't do that walking about."

ON THE WEB: For more Ottawa headlines or to contact Mitchell Raphael visit mitchellmccain.ca/mitchellmccain

The Tories' dilemma: big fight, no target



PAUL WELLS

Quebec City is gorgeous and festive this year as it celebrates its 300th anniversary, so Stephen Harper's national Conservative caucus held their summer retreat across-the-Atlantic, in the city of Quebec. Which doesn't look that hot and isn't celebrating anything.

The caucus met in a beautiful historic manor house in the middle of an open field, a considerable distance from anything. The Prime Minister loved this sort of thing, one of his ministers tells me, because when MPs and senators are stuck together in the middle of nowhere they have to bond. They were only able to get from Toronto to Quebec City winning lots of the nation's free fees and train tickets were already booked.

Of course ministers and senators took me back to that crazy Forest of Solitude and spent the week highlighting it to Quebec City at every opportunity for dinner and sightseeing. Harper has a lot of skills but he hasn't yet managed to repeal human nature.

That made their gloomy banquet and out. The Conservatives were remarkably chatty. The Prime Minister has a new communications director, Glendon, is heading out all over. Cabinet ministers were vigorously lining up at the podium microphone for press coverage. People from the Prime Minister's Office stood ready to brief reporters on the action and the thinking. "Clearly this caucus is about setting an agenda for the fall," one said. "It's not an election readiness caucus."

Stéphane Dion has been making noise about a fall election. He has made more noise than election every few months since he became the Liberal leader and so far, every time, he has been quick to follow up the election speech with silence, which is the name an election makes when it's not happening. "That snow has been played 11,111 times already in the life of this Parliament," one PMO staffer told me. Harper once travelled to nearby St-Augustine

give a speech gaudy Dion over election timing, telling him it was to "fish around." In other words other things are going on and focus on election, or let the government keep governing. Like many of the Prime Minister's best lines, this one is impressive if you don't inspect it too closely. Until the caucus he fishes, is a good fisherman and well-versed to cut bait. Dion—on and fishermen, as it happens—not eating but right now, against an backdrop of the night fishing mores?

The Conservatives are spending too much time on such details. Dion's "Green Shift" proposal, which would impose a tax on carbon consumption while cutting income taxes, is, in the Conservative lexicon, a "tax on every-

thing Dion didn't want to release his Green Shift in the second week of June. He wanted to introduce it two months earlier. But he is a fighter with a long history of considerably oversteering his drafts, until a boss tells him to cough up. Problem: he's the boss now. The relevant date kept... shifting.

Nine years ago Dion introduced the Climate Act outlining the goals of Quebec's climate. "One reason I asked Dion to introduce the bill in December was that that's the month we have both snow and sun in Quebec," Jean Chretien writes in his autobiography. "Given the risks that don't like to take to the streets without, and the winter underwear under the hood at their books or home for the holidays." Here is one measure of the distance between



How can you take on Stéphane Dion's Green Shift plan when nobody seems to care?

thing" that will destroy the economy. The Conservatives are having training sessions of all kind, on radio and TV, to targeted people across the country, to deliver that message. They're not P&G in a madman and this work they were planning to see in New South with another wave of ads.

Publicly they call Dion's Green Shift a folly that will drive the Liberals to their doom. Privately they're more positive. I asked a bunch of MPs when they're hearing about Dion's main platform points in their riding. One answered by looking a "no" with a shrug and frowning. Others conveyed the same message without hand signs. It's not that voters are in arms over Dion's plan, nor even that they're seeing Conservatives embracing it. They just overabundantly haven't heard about it. (They have, they haven't given a damn about the thought to what it might mean in their lives.)

It's hard to change the dynamics of a national politics when everyone is on reaction. The

strategy and its absence. The writer apathy that passed on Dion, under Chretien's mandate, in 1999 has become a writer apathy that makes it hard to get anyone's attention at 2008.

So the Conservatives are trying to place Dion's most important policy in a platoon, but quietly they think it looks more like a dump truck, more important to voters, launched at precisely the wrong time, not to be aware when an election does come, especially if Dion plays to type and it's not a cabinet minister in October to wait until May for the final showdown. It's like a deal where the other guy finally down his gun, only it's a rubber chicken. And the birds are good at it, too, so even if he manages for the thing, it's not down who's got, better, the guy pulling the chicken's leg. The Conservatives know they're supposed to worry. They're just not sure what about.

ON THE WEB: For more Paul Wells visit his blog at www.mitchellmccain.ca/paulwells

Twelve warrants, and not a prosecution in the lot



ANDREW POTTER

There is establishment air about exactly 10 years ago, few countries have supported the International Criminal Court as enthusiastically as Canada. And even so the information was being swallowed into contempt, few Canadians were as daring as our foreign affairs minister at the time, Lloyd Axworthy. In June 1998, at a conference leading up to the signing of the Rome Treaty that established the ICC, Axworthy gave a perceptive speech in defence of the principles that motivated the court's creation.

"An independent and effective International Criminal Court will help to deter some of the most serious violations of international humanitarian law," he said. "By isolating and stigmatizing those who commit war crimes or genocide, and removing them from the community, it will help to end cycles of impunity and retribution."

In short, the ICC would put a stop to the custom of endorsing a brutal dictator into retirement by offering him a Swiss bank account full of cash and a secure residence on the French Riviera. From now on, those accused of crimes against humanity would stand trial in accordance with principles of universal justice, to help achieve a more lasting peace among the people they terrified and the lands to which they had come.

A decade after it was launched, the ICC's roster of successes is not long. Despite having issued 12 arrest warrants—all in Africa—with four suspects placed under arrest, it cannot boast of a single prosecution. Critics have attributed this to everything from prosecutorial incompetence to proof that Western-style justice can't be applied to Africa, but there is actually a deeper problem, which even to the bone of Axworthy's defence of the court's mission. For those valuing peace and reconciliation, more often than not the ICC seems to be standing in the way.

With the recent indictment of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and the laying of charges in 2007 against Ugandan guerrilla leader Joseph Kony, it has become apparent that in Sudan and Uganda the ICC's investigative work is serving as an obstacle to peace. In both cases, the threat of being dragged before a court in The Hague has given the alleged criminals little incentive to give up their struggles.

The case of Joseph Kony is of particular interest to Canada. Kony is the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army, a Christian group that won't coexist peacefully with Uganda and which has spent the better part of the past 20 years terrorizing the southern part of the country. Kony is accused of all sorts of atrocities, from mass murder to sexual enslavement,



In Uganda the International Criminal Court is actually serving as an obstacle to peace

but his specialty involves walking into a village, ordering children to murder and murder their own parents, then forcing them to serve as soldiers in the LRA.

Three years ago the ICC issued arrest warrants against Kony and his top commanders, but they have no real shot of surrender without a guarantee of immunity from prosecution. Kony actually committed to a peace agreement back in April, but he refuses to come out of the jungle and sign it until the ICC drops the warrants.

That's not out of the question. Back in the 1990s, members of the international NGO community had fixated on a leaked Canadian Foreign Affairs memo indicating that our government was at least "open" to the idea of the UN Security Council asking the ICC to suspend the charges against Kony. This was seen as a complete betrayal of the court by

one of its biggest backers, and it confirmed some of the worst suspicions about Stephen Harper: not only is he just an ally to the Americans in multilateralism, but he also appears willing to sacrifice Canada's international reputation in order to suck up to George W. Bush.

Things aren't too straightforward. To begin with, people inside Foreign Affairs insist that Canada remains solidly behind the ICC, even if political considerations seem to have warmed. Given that it is probably impossible for anyone to be more loyal on the court than Axworthy, any change of minister, let alone government, would be seen as a rather thing down of the enthusiasm—a fact noted even under Paul Martin's government.

But more to the point, just because something pleases the Americans doesn't necessarily mean it is wrong. Yes, American conservatives are hostile to the court, but so are the moral reformers on the left, whereas it is an important aim to suppose "Western" forms of justice on African societies.

In his speech in Italy, Lloyd Axworthy drew an intrinsic connection between the desire for peace and the demands of justice. "Without justice," said Axworthy, "there is no reconciliation, and without reconciliation, no peace."

It is becoming increasingly clear that Axworthy had it wrong, and what many of the ICC's more blase supporters have trouble conceding is that there is a genuine moral dilemma here: "peace" or "justice" is just a variation on the old debate between the good and the right. These can and frequently do come into conflict, and when they do, how should we rank them?

Which should have priority?

The answer to that question is a matter of political morality or law. The International Criminal Court is first and foremost a political institution, and acknowledging that fact would be a first step to making it a more effective international player.

The division in my thoughts is clear through with political calculations—as one expects Vladimir Putin or his friends to be created any time soon, even the political blow would be enormous. But there's a very real fallout from charging dictators in African countries of no consequence, too—the ongoing terror and strife for the people most affected—and maybe the court and its supporters should start to give some consideration to that. ■

ON THE WEB: For more Andrew Potter visit his blog at www.macleans.ca/andrewpotter



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'Post-1988, winning became a dirty word. There was mediocrity. It was okay just to participate. We should strive to be the best.'

OUTSPOKEN OLYMPIAN ALEX BAUMANN TALKS TO KEN MACQUEEN ABOUT CANADA'S CHANCES IN BEIJING, AND THE HARD ROAD TO EXCELLENCE

Good money was never good enough for Alex Baumann. His athletic won him two gold medals in the 200- and 400-m individual medley at the 2004 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. His competition sport also earned him criticism after he retired from competition and demanded accountability from Canada's fishing union program. He moved to Australia in 1981, where he became a key part of its national elite sports machine. The Canadian Olympic Committee hired him back in 2007 to lead its new Road to Excellence program. Australia won 59 medals and finished fourth at the 2004 Athens Summer Games. Canada won 26 medals, finishing 18th. The C.O.C.'s first priority is to tip 40th in Beijing. The road has to start somewhere.

Q How much do you expect that the program will put on a spotlight on the funding for the Road to Excellence will impact Canada's performance in Beijing?

A Really the new funding from the federal budget that was announced this year hasn't actually flowed yet to the sports, or to the Canadian sports centers. There have been funds that were committed from Sport Canada in addition to what was there before but that is additional money. We've tried to prioritize resources to those sports where we feel there is the greatest chance for medal potential, but it's too early for Beijing. Our goal is obviously [London] 2012.

Q Targeting certain sports as opposed to

losing the money in everyone caused ripple. What has changed in the summer Olympic athletes world?

A Based on the winter athletes program, Owen's Podium, we have a fairly good model that shows if you prioritize sports that have the greatest medal chance you are more likely to get the results. Certainly know that in Australia where we targeted and prioritized quite extensively. It's performance-based system. Ultimately high performance isn't egalitarian. Some hard decisions had to be made.

Q Jason Zehnke, the septathlete, missed qualifying for the 2004 Games in Athens by a hair. He had been fighting against all that year and the odds but the support back then when she was a developing athlete.

A That's right. My focus is really on four things. The technical leadership is probably the most important thing, ensuring we have the best coaches to run the program. Training in competition is critical as well: providing athletes and coaches all the opportunities. Then, in your mention, the whole issue of injury management and prevention. Enhancing quality support services would be the third aspect. Obviously we're pushing our athletes and our team and we need to ensure that we have injury management and injury prevention strategies, and ensure support services like sports scientists and physiology, psychology and biomechanics are there as well. That's what the leading nations are doing. The fourth thing in terms of focus

needs to be increasing the organizational capacity of national sporting organizations. **Q** Explain what you mean by that.

A It's not good giving a sport \$100,000 to run a program, and not having the quality people to implement the program.

Q What sports are targeted for extra funding for Beijing?

A There are quite a few. The categories are rowing, canoeing and diving. Out of rowing two sports are athletics, women's sculler as a team sport, swimming is a category three sport, women's swimming is a two.

Q For the first time in Beijing, Canadian medals will be paid for their performance [based on gold, silver, bronze for silver, bronze for bronze]. Is this an effective motivator?

A To be honest I'm not sure that's a huge incentive. I just think that's something we have to do. It's not a huge amount, \$100,000 for gold, \$75,000 for silver, \$50,000 for bronze. That it does carry some weight in terms of rewarding the athletes for all the hard work. We've got to make sure we balance that out by making sure we've got the relevant programs and coaches in place.

Q There has been a massive women's rowing TV viewer reduction that when they consider why one team down has to win [Jennifer Kluge].

A There has been a huge imbalance. The main reason is that Canada got the 2010 Winter Games and came up with a fairly insensitive way to fund programs and athletes

prior to the Games. [The Vancouver Organising Committee] provides \$0 per seat and the government provides \$0 per seat. \$1.1 million each per seat over five years. I think that's fantastic, that's quite novel. Obviously we want to do well at the Olympics. The last thing we want is a pretty high ticket to come No. 1 in terms of total medal count. But I do believe we have to run high. There has been a considerable imbalance and hence the whole effort for how to increase for summer sports.

Q Are you satisfied with what the federal budget provided this year?

A We didn't get everything we asked for but I believe it's made a difference. There's millions of dollars additional this year, \$16 million next year, then \$24 million ongoing.

Q When you look at models for sporting excellence, what constraint comes to mind?

A I still think Australia has a pretty good model though I do think they're probably a little bit in the mix in this time around. They have a fairly integrated and

coordinated model with ministers and send money a central ministry in Canberra and sport ministers. That's taken a long time to develop. I do remember after the 2006 World Rowing Championships when Australia did extremely poorly with five medals. They started putting together a plan to have three ministries, but the medals probably didn't come to come from that until 2006. It takes some time. One of the features of the maritime model is that really put a lot of effort into coaches in the system. I think that's one I think the U.K. has started to get its act together. It isn't as coordinated as Australia but, particularly with the Olympics in 2012, they'll be a force. You can't really look at the Chinese model.

Q Why not?

A They just have so many kids. You can have an extremely high amateur rate.

Q And they do.

A And they do. As we can compare. Certainly Australia would be comparable to Canada with the economy of distance and the lack of population. Germany does a good job and also has a training center or amateur type of model. But since they take well. Plus the U.K. has a lot of athletes. But you can't take one model and transplant it into another country. We need to come up with our own model.

Q Some countries—Australia, the U.K. and the U.S. are missing some of their athletes with elite military units, or are drawing on the military for athletes. They do have a lot of the same skills.

A Yeah, and the discipline as well.

Q Are we doing anything like that?

A Not at this point. One of the things that

we need to take into account is the fitness, because we have such a small talent pool, it means that we have a proper talent identification and development program to identify those athletes that would be good in, for example, cycling or rowing and trying to find each other. It's easier for physiological sports like cycling and rowing. You can do a number of tests and you can identify whether the athlete has the engine or not. Sometimes we need to tap into the schools as well. And the whole idea of talent transfer. You can easily take an athlete from gymnastics and put them into diving with the right coaching and at the right age. For me the priority is coaching, getting that started and finding a coach going deeper in things. Talent identification and development would be part of that.

Q This is exactly what the Chinese have done. They're actually, by my count, to do top-level foreign coaches for their Games.

A Yes, I think the role of the coach has changed in the last 10 or 20 years where it's not just technical and tactical, particularly for head coaches. It's also providing the necessary leadership to manage and drive a really disciplinary team of physiologists and sport scientists. That's not easy. We have to ensure our coaches get the kind of professional development they need.

Q There are reports that some foreign coaches in China for athletes are being overworked and are under-feeding pressure to win.

A It's the same Olympic. I think China is only the gold medal that counts.

Q A former Chinese rowing coach, now working for Canada, and he was told one gold medal a week 1,000 dollars.

A Exactly. Maybe that's going to be an advantage for other countries. It has been known to happen, that where there is too little pressure the Chinese won't perform but I wouldn't count on that.

Q Cathy Priestner, Olympic senior vice president of sport for WMOC, says when they were designing the winter Games the Podium program, she was shocked to find that some of Canada's best athletes harbored debilitating doubts that they were truly world class.

A The confidence issue.

Q Exactly. Are Canadians unique in our doubt?

A I don't think so. That would need an attitude adjustment. Certainly on the winter side we've seen where nations break through. When you get up to that start gate or whatever, you really can't have any doubts. Maybe it's because we live so close to the [drama] and U.S. I don't know. But you take a look at all the top athletes that have come from Canada, they have tremendous confidence in their abilities. Not arrogance, but confidence that they can compete with the best in the world. I know when I competed prior to '81, I went around the world to make sure that I raced the best swimmers. If you do well in those competitions, that gives you tremendous confidence.

Q Didn't you pay a price with the Canadian sporting establishment years ago for saying some of the very things, that we can't, and shouldn't, accept ourselves?

A Oh yeah. I just believe that there has to be accountability for performance. This is when I got criticized. But I've haven't done well, we need to critically analyze why we haven't done well—and change. Not to say, it's not that bad and we should be satisfied with that. I came from having lived in Australia for 15 years and they get angry if they don't do well. We have moved that, in hockey. We are working to introduce a performance



'It's not a huge amount, \$20,000 for gold. But it carries some weight in terms of rewarding athletes.'

based system. This is one of the reasons I came back, I do believe there is a renewed focus on medals. As we all know, post 1988 [and the East] Johnson Olympic doping scandal in Seoul, winning became a dirty word. There was mediocrity. It was okay just to participate, and I certainly don't believe that. I think we should strive to be the best in the world. It doesn't mean we're in it all cost but I don't think sport is any different than academics or art or business—we should strive to be the best in the world. ■



VANCOUVER POLICE make an arrest; crime is down for the middle class, but for marginalized society the streets are messier

LESS CRIME, MORE FEAR

If most crime rates are falling, why are serious assaults on the rise in Canada?

BY JOHN GRUBER • Crime can be a hard subject to think deeply about, especially in the aftermath of a particularly disturbing incident. It's hardly help to bring the real issues into focus. Aided by newspaper work about the horrific death of Tim McLean, the 32-year-old Winnipeg man who was snatched and then held captive by another passenger on a bus travelling a lonely stretch of Nanaimo Highway, Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day took the opportunity to call for the case to be prosecuted "as aggressively as possible" as if there was some reason to imagine the authorities might go easy on the killer.

It's this sort of front-page coverage, with a bit of political spin thrown in, that causes criminologists who pore over crime data to worry about the gap between public perceptions and facts. The most recent Statistics Canada report on crime, released on July 12, showed that the national rate fell in 2007 to its lowest level in three decades. And the

decline is very broadly based. Most offences—from break-ins to homicides—are down. Most places—including every province but New Brunswick, and all of the nine biggest Canadian cities—reported lower crime rates last year than the year before.

But the numbers haven't done anything to quiet those inclined to tell a more alarmist story. Violent rights groups, some police, and, especially, the Tory government, all put more emphasis on popular images than dry data. "I don't think there's any question there are positive indicators out there," Justice Minister Rob Nicholson said in an interview when asked about the reassuring statistics. "But concern about crime in general is something I get every where that I go. I don't think that is illusory. I don't think it's imaginative. There are people in many parts of this country that are feeling less safe."

The disconnect between statistics and the way law-crime, and public fear that society is growing more violent, might seem impossible to reconcile. But there is a way to look at the figures that are some truth in both perspectives. One place to start is by pondering the unsettling data for the most serious types of

assault. While most crime was on the wane between 1998 and 2003, assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm climbed steadily year after year, posting a dramatic 53.3 per cent rise over the decade. The total number of those "assault level two" incidents in 2007 was 15,356, or 164 for every 100,000 people. In the same period, the far less troubling, but even more brutal, category called "aggravated assault" rose 18.6 per cent, or 3,403 incidents reported by police last year, although the rate for this "assault level three" category rose less noticeably.

Experts on crime trends rarely seek how to explain one violent assault in a less crime-ridden society. Some criminologists speculate that there might be something misleading in those figures. They certainly stand out. After all, between 1998 and 2007, the rate of homicide fell by 3 per cent, continuing a downward trend that began in the 1970s. Robbery was down 6.5 per cent, and the rate of sexual assault dropped 23 per cent. Even the mild or sort of assault, which used to be called common assault and is now known as "level one assault"—somebody, say, punching, slapping, or shoving somebody else—dropped by nearly 11 per cent over the 10-year period.



MIDDLE-CLASS FEARS ABOUT CRIME ARE AT ODDS WITH STATISTICAL REALITY



STABBING VICTIM MURRAY (left), the accused (right), Public Safety Minister Day

But when it comes to the violent incidents, broadly speaking, or looking at victims whose weapons were in hand, Statistics Canada's findings indicate such attacks are markedly up. Police aren't surprised. Inspector Mike Porras, head of the Vancouver Police Department's major crime unit, says the decline he has long experienced in some rough neighbourhoods. He says violent attacks, rather than more common knocking, have grown much more common over 10 or 15 years. "Back in the day, if we went into a bar, and there was a dispute, it would end up with a fist fight," Porras says. "We increasingly see now that it ends up with a stabbing. Or one of our very popular ones is a broken beer bottle or glass to the face. Or a shooting."

Several criminologists interviewed by this *Weekend* seemed sceptically accepting the rise of an unusual assault from police. Still, at least one well-regarded criminology professor, Neil Boyd of Simon Fraser University, suggests an explanation for the rise: rates of serious assaults that could end in death with Portman's most-violent year. Boyd says violence is getting worse among the most vulnerable in society, even as more Canadians are demonstrably growing less likely to find themselves the victims of crime.

This broader picture of declining crime and the same of different middle-class Canadians, who live and work in good areas, might reasonably be most concerned about. The rebranding and renaming, for instance,

dropped nearly 40 per cent between 1998 and 2007, and car thefts fell during the same period by just under 20 per cent. Yet over the same 10 years, drug-related violence, often associated with criminal gangs, was a growing problem in the worst areas of some cities.

Boyd says victims in those troubled neighbourhoods are more likely the gang members themselves, or illegal drug buyers, or others who by choice or chance find themselves in close proximity to dangerous young men. "We are safer, most of us," Boyd says. "But if you are part of that lifestyle, or if you are vulnerable to this kind of crime, you are more likely to be victimized. And it's hard to distinguish the victims from the offenders in those circumstances."

Of course violent criminals can hurt anyone. But the most recent detailed survey of crime victims by Statistics Canada, based on 2004 figures, showed that unemployed young people are the most at risk, and the danger rises sharply among those who go on frequently to be a victim of "violent aggression." Not surprisingly, violent crime was much less likely to touch older, married individuals, especially those in higher income brackets.

The notion of a sharply divided picture of crime in Canada—less reason to worry for the average citizen, more cause for alarm among those on the margins—can also tell other nations as well as political leaders. Law-and-order politics are all about reassuring law-abiding taxpayers who tend to vote, and

coating down hard on the thugs who edge them out. If the policy is more complex, the political sell is unclear.

It's not just the actual statistics that suggest the possibility of two quite different trends in crime. Data on young people also suggest less crime overall, but more of the same sort. Last year, the youth crime rate dropped by two per cent, but that decline was certainly in non-violent offences. Violent crimes committed by youth remained stable in 2007. In fact, since the mid-1990s the violent crime rate for youth has been steadily rising, even though property crime committed by youth has been trending down.

Youth crime is bound to struggle worldwide now for months in higher profile. Up to now, the Conservatives have focused on adult criminals, passing new laws to impose longer mandatory sentences for sexual assault offences and making it harder for those accused of serious crimes to get out on bail while awaiting trial. But Nicholson told *Weekend* his current review of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, enacted five years ago by the Liberals, will result in getting tough on offenders that fall "in its net," he said, "but it is of particular concern to Canadians."

He's almost certainly right about that. The steadily high youth violent crime rate is closely associated with highly publicized, drug-related gang activity, which might, in turn, be partly behind the rise in violent assaults. But will tough on crime measures make a difference? Rosalynn Gervais is a criminology professor at the University of Toronto, says comparing the recent Canadian and U.S. experience suggests an answer. Crime rates in both countries have been declining in two different ways. In the U.S., Gervais says, criminologists believe that trend is tied to less severe policing, like the approach famously practiced in New York City, and tougher measures on criminals in prison facilities. "I tell them Canada is not incarcerating more people," Gervais says. "And we haven't increased our sentence policy policies—[but] put the crime graphs for Canada against the graphs for the U.S., and you see exactly the same thing."

Gervais says experts don't really have any fully explanations for the continued wide decline in crime, so it's hardly surprising that criminologists like the rise in violent assaults are easier to explain. "Looking at single factors," the outcome, "is always dangerous and will inevitably be shown to be wrong." She suggests that a race of cultural, economic, and demographic factors are affecting crime rates. That's the two thousand and thousands, things to be aware in a political speech. This isn't debate on youth crime will, so debate, make it all read much simpler. ■

HITTING GOLD ON SKID ROW

The most notorious slum in Canada gets a millionaire makeover

BY RABBIT MACDONALD • "I've got to be out by September," says Jim, pointing to the Pacific Hotel, a boarding house in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Inside, men with scarves-Mike and Jay are two-paired the belly. Some crates bump drop from the ceiling. But far down, the Main Street hotel, with its second-level pub, has been famous. Come fall, it's unlikely Jim will be able to stay here, the city's last affordable neighbourhood. The rash of new condos like *Giggle*, the green and orange block going up next door, with units topping \$900,000, have made his \$150-a-month rental rare. "I don't know where I'm going to go," says the carpenter, who's on disability, as he casts his eyes over a stretch of Main Street the Vancouver Ave recently dubbed "reef decade" for "even the drug crowd." Right now, there are no vacancies here.

The unthinkable is happening: The Downtown Eastside, Canada's most notorious slum, is quietly disappearing. The "skid" signs are everywhere—scattered along Hastings Street, ground zero of the city's drug and homelessness crisis. In the past 24 months, hundreds of lots have changed hands as developers and speculators swoop up scraps to the city's so-called final frontier. Some of Vancouver's biggest players have bought in, including Haliborn, the group behind the \$100 million *Residence* at Ross-Corbin, Westbank Projects, developer of the *Shangri-La*, the city's tallest tower, and Macdonald Development Corp., which hopes to erect the Downtown Eastside's first high-rise. Despite fierce community opposition, *Concord Pacific*, the company headed by Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-shing that made a killing rebuilding the site of Vancouver's Expo 86—on a burning island with a glass roof—now plans along Hastings' southern stretch. Nearby, housing developer Robert Pang has seven million-dollar mansions on the go, including two runs of the century Hastings Street, one in the Black and Pans blocks. Blackstone,

multinational, long pouring in for Salt, a chef restaurant in Hood Alley. Wilson Yu, who owns Vix, one of the city's hottest restaurant, is used to be walking around the area for a new venue. Yes, there's gold in them, their big back alleys.

These criss-crossed sidewalks serve the world's most likely candidate for a makeover. Like a few years ago, Bob Remue, the city's most influential councillor, started talking about how that property values in the Downtown Eastside, depressed for decades, were set to spike. "It didn't take a genius to figure it out," he admits. Vancouver is a peninsula. (Out-packing the entire rest of the west, about 20 per cent of Vancouverians have already squeezed themselves into its dense core.) But the downtown was almost out of developable land. "The only thing left was the Downtown Eastside," says Remue. The market just needed a signal. And it came in 2009, with the resolution of a long-running dispute over the abandoned Woodward's department store on Hastings Street.

For years, an ugly battle had raged between area activists who wanted the museum, block-long site to become social housing, and some in the business community who thought it was ripe as well as a fork in the neighborhood. Then, in 2009, the province sold the site to Vancouver's newly elected city council, for a paltry \$5.5 million. The deal hinged on the city's fifth-largest parcel, including the 2010 Winter Olympics, which council had originally opposed. Jim Green, the past director of the Downtown Eastside Residents Association, then a powerful city councillor, negotiated a plan that would ultimately see the construction of a mixed-use project that combines market and non-market housing on the Woodward's site. Many of Green's old friends and allies were dismayed. "It was a direct case of Nixon in China," says Gordon Price, director of the city's program at Simon Fraser University and former longtime Vancouver city councillor. There would have been a "hoax" if anyone else had tried it, he adds.

When completed in 2019, the \$114 million redevelopment will stock 136 market condos



about 200 units of social housing, making Woodward's the most radically inclusive project in city history. "There's nothing like it in North America," says lead architect Gregory Hejranfar. A ground-level, three-story square-foot complex will house a grocery store, a gym, London Drugs, the local office of the National Film Board, and SFU's School for the Contemporary Arts. TD, the first bank

PHOTO TOP BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL; BOTTOM BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS FOR THE GLOBE AND MAIL

to move into the neighbourhood in decades, will open a branch. "A lot of people are going to sit in there, and, hopefully, learn to live together," says local resident Anne Smith. Douglas, who's finishing up a grant proposal of the Guelph area for its artists.

But the project unleashed a wave of gentrification. Two years ago, Remue, the project's architect, said the redevelopment was in the middle of the worst year—just 12 hours. Marked with the tag line "Be Bold or Move to Suburbia," the site looks on the "innermost atmosphere of an Oklahoma land rush," wrote the Star. For the development community, this was the cue. Not only were middle income Vancouverians willing to invest here, hundreds had lined up for the Woodward's pre-sale two months before demolition even began to work.

This spring, hundreds of low-income tenants, along with some of the city's poorest residents, were evicted in hundreds evicted in an

the boom. A fifth of the area's low-cost residential hotels, which served 1,075 more, have been sold. About 18 people now sleep in open-air shelters each night. The problem is "dramatically bigger than it ever was," says Rev. Rev. Matthews of First United Church, where 120 people sleep on the pews daily. Michael Clayton, a longtime neighbourhood advocate, says the Downtown Eastside is facing every different future. "It's not, as generally, and the community that's there—disgraced and victims," he notes. Or take the city's own, coming to drive the private market—and turn it to create social good, says Green. It's a battle being waged in most gentrifying neighbourhoods across North America—but in this case recognized by Vancouver's overboard, social-justice economy, and the history of five times.

The Downtown Eastside, says Price, is unlike any other hard-core neighbourhood. It's been called the term "skid row," which originally referred to the push beyond the city limits to the end, say, have a sign of

AND SOLD Concord Pacific tower, Bob Remue, a quarter of the old Woodward's, now a condo



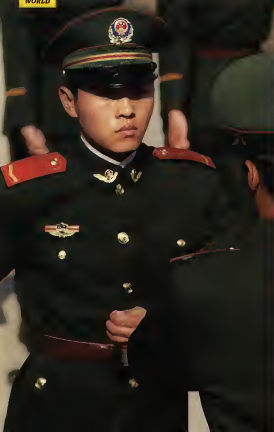
here. Since the '60s, it's been a bare-knuckle battle with a healthy stock of bars, bistros and cheap hotels. They came the gradual erasing of the historic Pacific Hotel. In the '90s, thousands of apartments flooded the city's cheapest neighbourhood. Today, 55 per cent of the area's estimated 4,000 dwellers have a high school or college education. It's not that the area is any more middle class, says Dr. Gabor Maté, a physician practicing in the Downtown Eastside who has only one patient over 60.

Previously, the powerful grassroots lobby that for 25 years worked to shield the neighbourhood from market development, and support its craggy marginalized residents,

helped secure the current ones. First, a large stock of high-quality public housing was built to shelter the growing disadvantaged population, explains University of British Columbia urban geographer David Ley. The effort was intense, but the housing served no "social data" the area for low-income people, says Ley. The neighbourhood was targeted for a "whole series of social services," he says, noting the needle exchange, free dental, and supervised injection site, among scores of others. "To some leftists the trap of becoming 'political care,'" adds Rev. Matthews—excluding his church by being allowed to "read water," says the minister, originally from Johannesburg. "Marginalized people simply continue to be treated as marginal."

The result was the most extreme concentration of urban poverty in Canada. By the '90s, every business except the pawnshops and 24-hour convenience stores had left. Says Rev. Matthews, who's the vice of Our Gallery on Hastings Street: "The neighbourhood was once a place of dirt and weekly addictions. 'Look the neighbourhood by storm,'" says Dean Wilson, a business adviser who has lived here for over 30 years. "Before, no one would come down here unless they had to. They, all of a sudden, you could get a \$10, a \$50 but." Even the arena-garage/warehouse/warehouse—rebuild the old tale. Sheer closed up shop in '98. By then, the area looked like a war zone, board of ugly, unattractive, forbidding.

When Woodward's opens in a year, the picture will be very different. But who's to blame of the residents? Some are being driven east to outlying suburbs, but they won't disappear completely, as they have in gentrifying U.S. neighbourhoods like New York's East Side. Residents. Within these 24 blocks, there remain 16,000 some of low income housing, plus over 100 social service agencies. "They aren't going anywhere," says Price. But there's been a definite shift in thinking by officials who once believed of constant crisis, and the idea of a new vision of a more inclusive community, with Ley. Last month, the B.C. government, which has begun reopening psychiatric hospitals, including Riverport, on the ribbon at a facility including psychiatric patients with addictions at nearby South Hastings—outside the Downtown Eastside. A year ago, a drug treatment facility opened in the Okanagan region of Kootenay. Still, no one believes the neighbourhood's edge will ever fade. Walking down Hastings today, you'll see as people walking on the street, dancing alone in their own mind. You might pass someone walking a pet cat as a sign. "This will never be another Vancouver," says Ley, referring to the high-end, high-rise neighbourhood next door. "No one wants another Vancouver," adds Remue. ■



DOES CHINA HAVE IT RIGHT?

Beijing is riding the wave of the future, argues a renowned internationalist

BY MAURICE STRONG

The China we portrayed in much of the Western media is far from the China that those of us who live here as foreigners, sharing in the excitement and the progress of this remarkable and dynamic country, find so compellingly attractive. As one who has been coming to China for more than 40 years and who now spends most of his time here, I cannot help but contrast, with dismay, what I see and experience here with the negative images to which so many in the West are exposed. Even the outpouring of sympathy at the tragic earthquake that caused such severe death and suffering in Sichuan province is accompanied by attempts by some to blame this on the Chinese government. Yet, no government could have responded so efficiently and speedily to a disaster of such massive proportions, and few if any nations are prepared to do so.

True, the devastating impact of this earthquake and its aftermath reveal weaknesses and inadequacies in governance at the local level. China has been making progress in building a vibrant, modern society, but inevitably it still has to cope with massive problems left by its turbulent past. Still, that progress is clearly observable by any standard. China has raised more people out of poverty than any nation has ever done, and is deeply committed to an objective of ensuring that

© 2008 China's different faces: soldiers from Jinan (left) and a young woman (right) before the Olympic torch relay

LEO JANG/GETTY; KEN BERNARDY

those who have been left behind are able to participate in the benefits of its dynamic economy.

The elements that the Chinese and foreigners living here continue to experience are minimal and for the most part understandable, given that no nation has suffered from societal breakdown, internal conflict and foreign intervention more than China has in the past century. It is a small wonder that the Chinese place such emphasis on the need for internal stability and security. And both the Chinese and the foreigners who appreciate the benefits of this internal order are impressed by the advancements that continue to be made in the movement toward more democratic processes and respect for human rights. Indeed, we must make choices in our own societies the standards we expect China to adopt as they move only slowly, and not very fully, toward its own path. The Chinese will reach more reflected by our example than by the unreflected and hypocritical content of so much of our criticism.

Societies progress at different speeds, and in different ways, toward incorporation into their political and social systems of the high standards and values to which they aspire. China has made immense progress toward meeting the goals and objectives articulated by its leaders of producing a harmonious society guided by justice that will meet the needs and aspirations of all its people and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable world society. Indeed, it is embarking on a distinctive and unprecedented pathway to a new model of development based on understanding the methods of capitalism to achieve the goals of socialism—a socialist market economy. The entire world has a great stake in the success of China in making this transformation. Following the example of the traditional industrialized countries would not be sustainable for China, or for the world. To be sure, this is a monumental challenge that will take a work in progress. But it is all of our interests that China be successful in doing so, and that we lend it our understanding.

THE CHINESE WILL BE MUCH MORE INFLUENCED BY OUR EXAMPLE THAN BY OUR CRITICISM

standing and support.

Nations attitudes and policies toward China progress and direction its policies and intentions can only be counter-productive, and contrary to our own interests. For there is not a single major world issue that can be resolved without China's co-operation. It is not that we should forget legions and our mistakes, criticisms and of failures, but that these be

these risks. But it cannot be expected to maintain these into binding commitments that are not matched by firm and enforceable commitments by the countries, notably the United States, whose environmental emissions of greenhouse gases have caused the irreversible damage already inflicted on the world. The attempt to shift the onus for climate change to China, India and other rapidly industrializing developing countries is neither fair nor workable.

China's participation in the post-Kyoto agreements is now being negotiated in secret and will be forthcoming only on the basis of a fair sharing of responsibilities and

obligations in which those who have contributed most to the problems of climate change must take the lead. Similarly, the attempt to shift the onus for increases in food, oil and commodity prices to China, as well as India and others now competing for these imports, will be counterproductive. The needs of the poor and the newly developing countries cannot be subordinated to the material and indulgent appetites of the rich and their pre-emption of a disproportionate share of the world's resources.

Co-operation and co-operative engagement, as a rule that is without precedent, are the only ways of resolving these matters, rather than allowing them to escalate into a new generation of conflict—a very real possibility. China's role will be indispensable. It will be a willing and constructive participant in this process, but not a subcontractor. The decisions taken by the G8 and other groups

emphasize that reflect the predominant alignment of the past cannot be expected to determine the positions of China and other newly developing countries that not only represent a majority of the world's people, but the largest share of its GNP and its continued economic growth. The countries that since the Second World War have dominated the institutions and dictated the terms of international co-operation must accommodate the reality that they are now a minority—a still influential one, because that represents more for the new majority.

China's commitment to internal security and stability and regional and world peace must also be taken seriously. Unlike Japan, which has evolved and sought to dominate each of its neighbors, coming only when it was defeated in the Second World War, China's territorial disputes with its neighbors have been resolved by differences over their borders rather than attempts to occupy or annex them. It is not that China has a high degree of autonomy, including special rights such as sovereignty from the one-child policy, while vigorously rejecting separatist demands, as most countries do.

Recent disturbances in Tibet were led by monks whose traditional privileges and control over the majority of the population has been severely curtailed, while the majority who live in poverty and squalor are experiencing new opportunities as a result of the modernization of the Tibetan economy. To be sure, this process has been a difficult and even painful one for many, but both Chinese and Tibetans continue to learn and to accommodate the changes that will enable Tibet to remain its distinctive cultural and religious heritage while according its people new and growing opportunities for a better life. Even in the Dalai Lama does not advocate

aspects the independence of Tibet from China, and his differences are related to the degree and nature of the autonomy Tibet could be given within China. Recent events that undermine continuing problems should not obscure the immense progress that has already been made.

Taiwan is the other main example of China's unshakable commitment to retaining the integrity of its territory while accommodating the important differences that

The alternative, in all these cases and others, is a serious and growing potential for conflict, at a time when the world needs a new and increasingly increased degree of co-operation. This must be focused principally on those issues that affect the very survival of humankind, and that transcend the narrower and self-serving interests of individual nations. This requires a radical strengthening of the international agreements and institutions to foster extensive co-operation, particularly a reformed United Nations and its agencies.

China must be, and is, truly prepared to play a constructive and leading role in this process. It is in its own interest to continue to subject China to the unreflected, prejudiced and hostile attacks that can only serve to nourish its own insecurities and isolation tendencies. But China will not and cannot be expected to be subservient to the decisions and influences of the small number of more developed nations that continue to assert dominance in international policy-making and institutions, which they have imposed for so long.

Unreflected and ideologically biased critics of China should ask themselves why it is that the majority of Chinese today see better off and better off than ever, why more overseas Chinese are returning to China, and why more foreigners are enjoying excursions of life here that make them want to stay, even if it involves changing their employment in the U.S. Indeed, I am one of the many who enjoy and appreciate living in China, and being caught up in the excitement of the remarkable dynamism of the unprecedented transition that this great nation is experiencing. Indeed, I feel privileged to participate in it. The re-emergence of China as a world leader is one of the most important events of this past of history, and one that will have a profound and decisive impact on the future of the entire human community. This is the China we know and want the entire world to know. The Beijing Olympics, which will focus the world's spotlight on the new China, will provide a unique opportunity for the world to view China as its people and friends do. ■



A WOMAN washes in a public outdoor facility where, last month, people splashed in an Internet news post (left).



and their pre-emption of a disproportionate share of the world's resources.

COMING TOGETHER AND ENGAGING



UNITED STATES, 2004-2005

A MASSIVE GENERATOR at Three Gorges Dam, and (below) a flood of migrant workers in Beijing, pre-Olympic Games



co-operation, particularly a reformed United Nations and its agencies

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS IS A NEW AND IMMENSELY INCREASED DEGREE OF CO-OPERATION



TURKEY'S SHADOW WORLD

Is the fight between secularists and Islamists about money?

BY ADRIAN R. KHAIR • It has all the hallmarks of a thriller: in the dark underbelly of Turkey's political and military establishments, a shadowy group of ultra-nationalists plots to topple the democratically elected Justice and Development Party (AKP) government. A coup is planned for 2009, the details of which are allegedly discovered in the diary of a retired official. In January 2008, the government's newspaper, *Milliyet*, announced, including writers and intellectuals, and the dreaded term—"disgrace"—in mean Turkish political discourse.

In response, the ultra-nationalists, self-appointed vanguard of the kind of extreme nationalism that Kemal Ataturk, Turkey's founding father, advocated to their inalienable principle of the Turkism, take a case against the AKP in Turkey's Constitutional Court that would dismantle the party. They accuse the Islamist-rooted AKP of undermining "Kemalist" foundations—ering among other things constitutional amendments to passed by the AKP-dominated parliament that would

repulse law-breaking hard-core being worn at Turkish universities. The standoff escalates. The AKP accuses the ultra-nationalists of operating as a "deep state" with the same Erdogan, after the legendary battle of the original Turkic people. It is the ghost in the machine, AKP's ultra wing, functioning as an arm of the right wing establishment, carrying out assassinations and bombings intended to sow enough chaos and fear that the military would feel obliged to intervene with yet another coup.

The July 27 twin bombings in Istanbul's Glaxo shopping district, just hours before judges began deliberating on the future of the AKP, only worsened the tension. That attack, the worst in Turkey since a series of coordinated bombings in November 2003, killed at least 37 civilians and injured another 150. And while investigators are blaming that Kurdish separatist movement responsible for the rebels' deed, many analysts also see the hand of Erdogan.

This is Turkish politics at its most seething, threatening what has been a rather tame century for this nation of 72 million, who made no join the European Union. A 3,489-page indictment against dozens of men and women with alleged links to Erdogan, re-

referred by Turkish prosecutors on July 14—eight days after the bombings, including two generals—accuses the alleged conspirators of everything from sedition to exacting people to money and blood. That case is still pending, although the case against the AKP was resolved on July 10, leaving the party intact but reducing its state funding by half for 2008.

That decision not to close the AKP may look like vindication for the ruling party, but for the 11 judges voted for it, raising the constitutionally required consensus by mere single vote. Ten of the 11 agreed that the AKP is involved in anti-secular activities, reinforcing the belief that the Constitutional Court remains ideologically bound to the right-wing establishment. So the decision, according to some commentators, may only be a ray of deception, and the message is simple: if the AKP should watch itself.

But is the AKP in fact poisoning Turkey for an Islamist takeover? "The AKP is not trying to create a Taliban-style Islamic state in Turkey," says Erkin Gul, a Turkish journalist and founder of *Insider*, a media watchdog and press freedom advocacy group based in Istanbul. "It is, however, trying to install Islamic values in society." But Kucuk adds that after six years of AKP rule, Turkey has

remained secular and has moved closer to a European model of social norms. So the power struggle between religious conservatives and ultra-nationalists, while real, may have more to do with consensus than ideological lines. In the end, it's about the money.

Since the AKP took power, Turkey has been booming. Street-level reforms downed by the European Commission as part of negotiations for EU membership have opened the door to foreign investment, prompting a flood of dollars and euros. Massive tourism revenues are being derived from an Istanbul and other tourism destinations are galloping ahead. But the spoils of economic success haven't been spread equally. In a 2006 article written by Middle East Quarterly editor and resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, Michael Rubin, *corrupt Turkish businessmen—operating behind the iron grip the AKP has on the economy, protecting its own interests ahead of the broader business community.* "The growth of the Islamic business sector is apparent across Turkey," the report says. "And appears intimately linked to the AKP's rise."

That sector, reportedly headed by a group of Islamist businessmen calling themselves the Anatolian Tigers, is based in central Anatolia, Turkey's religious heartland. And it seems poised to dominate Turkey's economic future. "The changes the AKP is introducing have an economic dimension, which involves the implementation of a

totally unregulated Islamic economy model," says Aris Ergun, professor of economics at Bogazici University in Istanbul. "That would mean the opening of the way to significant capital accumulation in the hands of new businessmen close to the AKP." The windfall has already been significant: the AKP is insulated from threats to its finances by a large hoard of private funds.

But where is this money—"grain money" as it's being called, in reference to its Islamic roots—coming from? The theories are many: Israeli investors are one significant source, says the Middle East Quarterly report. In the first year following the 9/11 attacks, the author argues, Israeli investors pulled up more than \$2 billion to a \$200-billion from U.S. holdings. That has been invested elsewhere, up to \$30 billion of it earmarked to have gone into Turkey's unofficial economy—including into the hands of Islamist businessmen through a vast network of Islamic finance centers, which have deposited some of it into AKP coffers. That has helped the AKP privately underwrite some popular projects,

ON TAYYIP ERDOGAN OF THE AKP: changes that risk are raising a 'deep state'.

like parking out first school textbooks in Konya, a city in the heart of Anatolia, and reducing taxes on some consumer goods.

But a party dealing in the dark world of shadow economics is not going to win Turkey. "This is always the case when a new government takes over," says one Kurdish leftist leader with links to Turkey's vast underworld, speaking on condition of anonymity. "Control of the unofficial economy follows the people in power. That's the way it's always been." In this case, the "gaining" of Turkey's unofficial economy, which was estimated to be worth as much as US\$15 billion in 2003, has benefited primarily marginalized Turkish groups with strong religious credentials, including out the secularist ultra-nationalist—even as the AKP has hit the mafia thought to be associated with its roots.

For some Turks, there are no groups against a new and even more powerful Islamist underground. "Turkish politics has always been on the mafia," says one expert in Istanbul with close ties to Turkey's Islamic underworld. "The financial trust involves agents like a mafia. They're not involved in illegal arms-like drugs and smuggling—they're deeply religious people—but they run their businesses like mafia outfits." Indeed, the close relationship between the AKP and its group funds (itself the Nephilim Brotherhood (Abdullah Dül, Turkey's equivalent, is reported to be a former member) has created a nexus of politicians and businessmen whose agenda, some speculate, is their desire to turn Turkey into an Islamic run family business. Considering the financial world it represents, that economic decision does have the potential to incite a political war.

What that the impetus behind the court case brought against the AKP is difficult to say, but what is beyond doubt is that, in the past, the benefits of the unofficial economy went to ultra-nationalists in the deep state, across through their media in coordination. "Now the financial trust is changing the landscape," says the Kurdish mafia boss charged in Turkey for an underground world. "It's a road to open up to have power to the Islamists—first, the AKP, will not be closed. But in the film era of Turkish politics, the end will be more impossible to predict."



SPAIN: KNIGHTS TEMPLAR RIDE INTO COURT
A Spanish judge, claiming to be heir of the Knights Templar, are suing Pope Benedict XVI, demanding the order be reinstated in 1918. Pope Clement V, under pressure from the king of France, disbanded the Templars despite their services in the Crusades. The alleged heir, who claims to be a descendant of the Templars, has insisted that if they don't win, they will use the Vatican for US\$10 billion in assets the rich order supposedly lost on dissolution.



NO INTELLIGENCE

How good is the information provided by the CIA on Iran?

BY MICHAEL ROSS • In a recent front-page article by Seymour M. Hersh in *The New Yorker* suggesting that the Bush administration has stepped up its \$500-million-a-year covert action against Iran, a highly respected and long-serving Iran expert and decorated veteran of CIA covert operations in the region has commented that the money would be wasted were the CIA in the worst control of its "intelligence provided to the President by the CIA, which he will use to make his decisions, may prove to be false or non-existent," says Hersh (a pseudonym), whose writings included more than 15 years of continuous overseas deep-cover service in several regions before he recently resigned from the CIA in good standing.

Wasting the CIA's culture of covert-style bureaucracy, risk-averse, senior management, and senior officials overlooking covert and far more employees, Jones claims that CIA human intelligence operations against Iran are designed to frighten activity. "Because of the billions of dollars given to the CIA, the CIA will be unwilling to admit it has no intelligence on Iran and will instead be tempted to provide a false assessment of the threat," adds Jones, whose book about his career, *The Hidden Factor: Inside the CIA's Dysfunctional Intelligence Culture*, was published last month.

That assessment of U.S. intelligence gathering in Iran seems to be as stark contrast to the efforts of Israel's intelligence service, the Mossad, and its efforts to dismantle Iran's nuclear infrastructure since the early 1980s. At the end of June, Ali Akbar, 45, was executed to death in Tehran for operating as a recruited Mossad spy in Iran. Akbar's account not only admits that he provided intelligence to his own officers about Iran's nuclear program, but also admitted to operations aimed at disrupting "research projects." Akbar said Iran's nuclear program was in a constant intelligence capacity admitted that it is some cases the failure caused by the reasons were "irreversible and big."

According to Jones, the Iranian intelligence target is not as difficult as it may seem. "The determination to get out and recruit Iranian sources has been lacking, but there has always been plenty of money," he says. "Iranians often have favorable opinions of the United States, and many have family members abroad or U.S. citizens residing in the U.S." As opposed to other human intelligence recruitment operations, many potential Iranian sources are known to speak English and were educated in American universities.

With Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps having tested the Shahab-3 long-range rocket whose 2,000-km estimated range includes Israel—there has been intense pressure



WALT DUBOIS Iranian covert watch firing of Shahab-3 missile

not on Western intelligence services to more accurately assess Iran's non-conventional weapons capability. Iran's largest city, Tehran, has been mentioned in an order to Iran's top nuclear leader Ali Akbar as a potential target for Iranian missiles, and the Israeli intelligence community has noted that the window for action is quickly closing.

But evidence in Israel have indicated that a pre-emptive strike will only occur with U.S. approval due to the wide range of American interests in the region. Still, according to Jones, Israel may be the only country to have a clear understanding of the breadth of Iran's non-conventional weapons capabilities. "I know the target, and I know that the CIA has no human sources of any quality, and that the President, the U.S., and our allies are walking into danger the Iranian nuclear weapons issue without the intelligence they need," he says. "When the President makes a decision, he'll be doing so blindly." ■

Michael Ross's *The Violence* (McGraw-Hill/Oxbridge), about his 15 years in the Mossad, recently appeared in paperback.

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Dirt poor: eating mud to survive

BY KATE KENNEY • This summer has brought some stability, new roads and more food to Haiti—but gas prices are rising again, and with them the fear of more violence.

The price of gas is already bad as it was in April when violent riots left seven people dead. Haiti's government had to tilt fuel subsidies to keep the price from rising enough to buy the gas. Higher gas prices quickly translate into a higher cost of living for the poor because the cost of busi-



WITH GAS and food prices rising, poor Haitians devour mud cakes

ness and transporting food go up. To make matters worse, the food subsidies that provided the population with some relief over the summer could run out by September, leaving families who have long relied on them particularly vulnerable to malnutrition. "There is widespread concern that there will be more violence," says Sarah Wilkins, the Caribbean specialist for U.S.-based agency Christian Aid.

Haitians find poorer economies and a heavy reliance on imported food have made the economy one of the hardest hit by the spike in food and fuel prices earlier this year. According to the UN, three-quarters of its population live on less than \$1.25 a day. Wilkins is afraid the country could see more cases of starvation within the next year.

A recent report in the Guardian newspaper says that already more people are eating locally made "mud cakes"—literally pellets made of mud—wallowing in hunger pains. Until recently, pregnant women ate the day parties to try and get more iron in their systems, but children are eating them too. Dr. John Cornill, who's spent much of the past 27 years working as children's clinics in Haiti, says the next blow may be a water crisis. "I wouldn't be surprised if there are water riots in the future because of a lack of clean water for the vast majority of Haitians," he says. ■

About to snap? Then stay back.

BY CAMERON ASHWORTH VINGER • Protesters have long been seen as a nuisance—but ever since the high-speed car chase that ended with the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, they've also been increasingly viewed as a threat.

Given that perception, it's perhaps not surprising that Los Angeles is now mulling over the idea of introducing an "anti-paper chase" law to keep aggressive photographers at bay. Last week singer John Mayer, along with actors Mike Vitar and Tim Robergs, joined forces with elected officials and law enforcement leaders to discuss ways to regulate belligerent camera slingers. They want to push forward an ordinance proposed by local councilman Devin Zine that aims to create a "personal safety zone" between photographers and their targets. "My biggest concern about this issue is my right to say no," said Vitar, while Mayer proposed that paparazzi be required to obtain a license so they can be clearly identified.

The move might also help to protect the paparazzi. After all, the farther away they are from their targets, the less likely they are to be punched out. In June, Malibu residents were caught on videotape chasing a paparazzo on a beach who was trying to snap a few photos of actor Matthew McConaughey. The 29-year-old paparazzo later told police that he was beaten up by a mob of surfers who threw his camera in the ocean.



PAP ATTACK: Regulating celeb snappers in 'L.A. trying to keep calm'

Turn on a Florida wire the campaign at a waste of time. Los Angeles Police Chief William Bratton said requiring paparazzi to register for a license would be "like trying to herd cats." Besides, he says, the problem seems to be fixing on its own. "If you notice, since January [Spain] started wearing clothes and behaving. They [Haitians] out of town not bothering anybody—thank God—and evidently Lindsay Lohan has gone gay, so we don't seem to have much of an issue." ■

Executive privilege: blame others

BY PATRICIA TREMBLE • It was her first press conference since taking power eight months ago, and it didn't go well. Argentina's President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner elected after her husband Néstor Kirchner was constitutionally barred from running for election, is facing an economy in crisis. But at a press conference last Saturday, she did little but anger her critics in a breathtaking display of arrogance.

The trouble began in March when Fernandez announced she would hike agricultural



FERNANDEZ: Her economic policy is in ruins, but she has no regrets

export taxes on key crops such as soy and wheat. The move was intended to increase government revenues while keeping domestic food supplies stable by making exports less profitable. But farmers, wanting to take advantage of soaring world prices, protested and blocked roads for nearly five months.

Argentinians sided with the farmers and her populist typlagued to its par case, but Fernandez dug in her heels and sent the tax to zero next year, when her coalition has a majority. Thus, the bill didn't pass. Members of her own coalition rebelled, with her vice-president, Julio Cobos, carrying the tie-breaking vote to defeat the bill on July 12. The resignation of the economics minister and head of her cabinet have since added to her political woes.

Maryladden might consider that the policy was misguided, but not Fernandez. At Saturday's press conference she admitted to just one mistake: underestimating the opposition. She also took some time to reject claims that the official inflation rate, which is pegged at nine per cent, is being manipulated to hide the true state of a lagging economy. That figure was widely disputed and most analysts put the real number at more than 20 per cent.

The one thing lacking from the speech was any sign of a viable economic reform plan. Where the markets opened on Monday, investors pulled out of Argentine assets, sending the Merval index down by 3.6 per cent. ■

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WHY YOU'RE STILL GETTING GOUGED

Inflated profits, regulations, taxes and timid shoppers keep prices high

BY COLIN CAMPBELL • Once a month, Henry Tinley jumps in his car—just after the morning rush hour and with a tank close to empty—and makes a 45-minute drive from his Vancouver home to Blaine, Wash. After stopping across the border using his recently acquired Nissan pass, he fills up with cheaper American gas and shops off at a packaging store, Hagen of Blaine, where the owner, Jeff And Internet online gear he picks up the computer parts and memorabilia he routinely

buys online from the U.S. and has shopped there under his name. The cross-border shopping ritual saves him somewhere from \$50 to hundreds of dollars a trip—at the very least, the equivalent of a nice dinner out, he says. This month, he plans to buy a piece of new computer hardware in the U.S. for about \$100. Buying the part in Canada would cost \$120, he estimates. As for Canadian consumers changing more than their American counterparts: "I think they're being greedy and gouging Canadians," he says. "I don't like it."

It wasn't supposed to come like this for Canadian consumers. When the Canadian dollar matched parity with the U.S. greenback in Sept. 26, 2007, Canadians celebrated. The news was trumpeted in headlines like the result of some free-market match. "It's 50 cents—\$1 U.S." was simply said. For the first time

in over three decades, Canada seemed to be back on equal footing with its neighbor to the south. But after reaching such great heights, Canadians quickly discovered that the view wasn't all it was cracked up to be. Shoppers noticed they weren't paying seemingly high prices for basic goods compared to Americans—in the case of big-market items like cars, sometimes even thousands of dollars more. Retailers and distributors vowed these cross-border price gaps would narrow over time as they adjusted to the stronger loonie. Well, almost a year later, we're still waiting, and savvy shoppers like Tinley are still saving thousands by taking their business to the U.S.—ones after the next thing that fits the cost of gas and taxes.

Few people have been shocked more than Canadian consumers by recent American retailers. The latter has acted as cheap for years compared to the U.S. dollar, largely because of demand for Canadian goods and confidence in the oil-and-commodities-rich Canadian economy. That's all good news, and with a dollar that gives them more bang for their buck, Canadians should feel richer. Few are. Over the past year, the loonie has averaged about \$0.99 cents. But consumers are still paying as much as 10 per cent more than Americans for many basic goods, according to some surveys. "It's ridiculous," says Carle Thibault, who works at an interior design store in Burlington, Ont. She crosses the border about every six weeks to visit her sister in Lockport, N.Y., and buy mostly off-the-shelf and consumer items, as well as groceries and electronics. Thibault says she's been against her better judgment this spring and bought a sweater at a Canadian \$120 men for \$120, only to find it at the retailer in New York for \$110. Her sister's in the U.S. price was \$100—50 per cent less. "I was rich!" she says. "I wish it didn't have to be that way."

Why is it, then? There's plenty of blame to go around for the price advantage for Canadian consumers, from retailers and distributors pocketing the difference from the stronger loonie, to government regulators and taxes putting up price higher than they need be. But the real culprit is always the same: cash registers across the country's retailers are losing out, and in that typically Canadian way, releasing it without much of a fuss.

According to a recent report by BMO Capital Markets, prices of consumer goods in Canada, overall, sit 10 per cent higher than in the United States. That's down from 24 per cent in 2007, but the gap is still "extra-

ordinarily large," says Doug Power, deputy chief economist at BMO. In fact, consumer prices have actually risen faster in Canada than in the United States over the past three months, suggesting that any margin price reductions we've seen so far thanks to the stronger dollar may be all we're going to get, adds Porter. The Consumers' Association of Canada (CAC) has also been tracking prices in the U.S. and Canada, and its informal survey pegs the difference at closer to 25 to 30 per cent. Building on the BMO survey, Maclean's looked at an additional 66 items—everything from cars to perfume—and found Canadians are paying 24 per cent more than their American neighbors. A Honda Accord, for example, has costs \$14,999 in Canada and just \$10,999 in the U.S.—36 per cent less. The average price of ChapStick in Canada is about \$2.50. In the U.S., it's more like \$2—or 25 per cent less. Forget a narrowing of the price gap, these results (based on randomly selected prices where available as well as averages from across the country) suggest that, over all, retailers and wholesalers have not made any progress at all over the past year. "It's still very real and it's still there," says Bruce Cran, president of the CAC. "We're being ripped off."

Even purchasing power parity data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which shows currency conversion rates that eliminate the difference in price levels between the two countries, haven't budged. In the past five years, they've moved insignificantly about 1 to, not going. Canadian currency gives us 20 per cent less purchasing power than Americans.

Nor have these pricing disparities been a mere ploy in the auto industry. When a Canadian pays 25 per cent more than a U.S. driver for a 2007, it means that a few cars are sold. What's the reason for this? A 2007 BMW 3 Series, for example, is \$16,000 in the U.S. and \$20,000 in Canada. After years, and under pressure from consumers, several automakers took out full-page newspaper ads announcing new "Canadian" prices. In some cases, the reductions were significant. Lexus cut the price of its RX350 SUV to \$41,500 from \$41,900. It's now 14 per cent higher than the U.S. suggested retail price of \$37,900. But those were the exceptions. In general, the price gap remains about as wide as the Grand Canyon. The manufacturer's suggested retail price for a Mazda CX-9 SUV, for instance, is \$18,999 compared to \$16,995 in Canada, or 13 per cent more. In its survey, BMO found that most Canadian cars sit 19 per cent more in Canada, while luxury brands cost 30 per cent more. A Mazda's price of 10 vehicles in various classes found 15 per cent higher prices in Canada. "If there are 15 million vehicle

sales a year in Canada and if each vehicle is on average three or four thousand dollars higher in price, that's about an extra \$6 billion a year that consumers are paying for cars," says Ian Irvine, a professor of economics at Guelph University, who has studied the price gap. Irvine's survey prompted him to travel across the border, to Burlington, Vt., to buy his new Subaru—strong about \$9,000, he says.

Carleton says the gap is due to the extra costs of doing business in Canada. Toyota says the higher prices are higher here because of regulatory requirements (in its words, Toyota has gone further than most other automakers to rise the gap). But that defense hasn't stopped Canadians from taking their money and

have made in Canada barely to do it. In Canada, the best deal possible than they do with trying to get down the border, growing grey market for car-related by cross-border shoppers. Cross-border deals for consumers are lost profits for automakers, who are putting enormous pressure on U.S. dealers not to sell to Canadians, says Art Zick, manager of Toronto Auto Dealers, which exports cars from the United States. Subaru, for example,



RECORD NUMBERS OF CANADIANS SHOP U.S. STORES



has until recently tolerated Canadian buying in cars from U.S. dealers. Now, like other automakers, it's telling dealerships in the States to cut it out, says Zick. Canadian cars, however, aren't giving up. Last September, a \$1 billion class action lawsuit was launched against automakers, alleging they have been interfering with independent dealers who sell cars across the border. "There's a big problem here," says lawyer Henry Farrelly, whose firm filed the suit in September. "We feel there's actually choreographed and designed behavior to keep prices inflated in Canada."

There are plenty of places in the supply chain where price bottlenecks can stay the beneficiary's strong loonie from much of the same. Most often, that's at the point of sale that gets fingered as the main culprit. But retailers and wholesalers have no shortage of excuses for their pricing behavior. Topping the list is the notion that Canada is a smaller market than the United States. Because American retailers are in a bind between with fierce competition and to trim the number of shoppers, they inevitably end up with cheaper prices. Canadians, on the other hand, have fewer options, and retailers here don't get the same volume discounts as their American counterparts. On top of that, retailers argue that it's simply more expensive to do business in Canada. Transportation costs in a huge country like Canada are higher and those are unique costs associated with things like bilingual labelling.

heading south in record numbers to buy cars (many of which are built in Canada). In just the first six months of this year, Canadians have bought over 100,000 vehicles from the U.S., putting them on pace to smash last year's record of 100,000 cars. "When you go down the car aisle, that's where it really becomes obvious that there's more choice and traditional bargain at play here," says Porter. Arguably, the price reductions automakers

Why blockbusters still rule the world



STEVE MAIZE

In October 2004, Wired magazine's editor-in-chief Chris Anderson published an article entitled "The Long Tail," in which he argued a novel hypothesis: the Internet had forever altered the way that knowledge is spread, and that this stream is dying, they said. And it's not?

Well, as you may have noticed, the use of the blockbuster has stubbornly refused to play along. Last weekend, *The Dark Knight*, a heavily promoted, big studio blockbuster, crashed records with the biggest opening weekend for any movie, over a few days ago to become the fastest movie ever to break the US\$100 million barrier in ticket sales, and it seems certain that it will eventually make more than US\$300 million worldwide. So to so-and-so two of them have come in the past three years. In fact, of the 10 biggest opening movie weekends of all time, nine of them have come in the four years since *The Long Tail* put blockbusters on death watch.



We like the idea of endless choice, but most of us don't venture past the bestsellers

The implications for business were potentially enormous. It meant that an online bookstore, for example, could do better at profit by offering 10,000 books—all of which sell five dollars each—than a traditional store selling 1,000 books 50 times each. In practical terms, Anderson argued, a movie that the age of blockbusters is over. Henceforth, he said, smart businesses would stop trying to build one or two massive hits in hopes of achieving the hardcore norm of mass popularity. Instead, they would produce a broad range of products to exploit the vast potential army of niche interests and the low cost of products available on the Web. When Anderson expanded his article from books to music, he summed it up in the subtitle: "The future of business is selling lots of more."

Ironically (or is it paradoxically?), Anderson's book became one of the biggest blockbusters in business publishing. The author became a minor celebrity on a Web guru and a hot ticket on the speaking circuit. The book's rise mirrored the modern business mantra, casually flipped into conversation by everyone from CEOs to down the main

stream is dying, they said. And it's not? But anecdotal evidence only gets you so far. To truly evaluate the usefulness of the theory you have to dive into the numbers, and at exactly *Business*, associate professor of business administration at Harvard, did just that. He then pored over data from two services: Hollywood, the online music marketplace by Anderson in his book, and Quidell online movie rental. Turns out *The Long Tail* isn't flattened by close scrutiny.

Anderson found that although sales of obscure titles have risen, there are far more titles in the library that aren't at all. So, rather than the long tail getting longer, it's getting longer and longer. More importantly, sales of those obscure movies and songs aren't coming at the expense of hits. In fact, more money is being channeled into the select few mega-blockbusters. As if there's any

"The importance of individual battles is not diminishing over time, it is growing." It's also important to know that about as many as buying those obscure movies and albums. They are a niche unto themselves—people who watch a lot of films and listen to a ton of music. Elsewhere, it's also shown that if you're watching obscure movies, you are almost certainly a huge movie buff. Not even watching an obscure film instead of *Iron Man*. You're watching those movies because you're already into the blockbusters. Perhaps more surprisingly, those heavy users tended to rate the blockbusters highest. The more low budget an album was, it turns out, the more you appreciate. *The Dark Knight*.

Finally, Anderson's research finds little connection to movie releases. Sure we will have a few unknown bands in our midst, but by and large, things are popular because they're better than the alternatives. The explosion of options and choice doesn't change that. In fact, Anderson's conclusions wouldn't even be noteworthy if not for the enormous popularity of *The Long Tail*.

So why did Anderson's thesis take off like wildfire? First, he said it promised a radical shift. We're attracted to any compelling argument that promises a fundamental change in the way we view the world, and history abounds with examples of once visionary ideas that turned out to be wrong.

But perhaps most importantly, it pandered to our egos. It appealed to our inner wish—the one that believes we're above the herd, that we're different, and that the Internet will set us free to do and see our unique and sophisticated tastes. The truth is less flattering. We like to think we

are, in brief, consumers of unique, original, and rare. But most of us never get around to watching *Snakes & Ladders* or *Blues Brothers* because we were busy being *Princes of the Caribbean* for the fourth time.

We all wanted to believe in *The Long Tail*, but we couldn't say away from the blockbusters. While we all like the idea of endless choice, most of us are never going to venture far beyond the bestsellers list. Contrary to Anderson's advice, the future of business is doing pretty much what you've always done. But the emergence of the Web means there may be a way to wring a few bucks from the flops you previously wrote off as useless.

In Anderson's defense, that probably would not have fit on a book jacket. ■

Steve Maize is a freelance writer.

Why great CEOs are born in July

BY JOHN UNTCH • Researchers have known for ages that the little leaguers who are the oldest in their age bracket are most successful, because they're bigger and stronger than their younger teammates. But a new study shows that this advantage—called the "July effect"—applies to CEOs too.

Maureen Lee, a finance professor at USC's Viterbi School of Business, has found that the older students in each grade during the school year are more likely to become CEOs. He says the selective age effect is a "July benefit," that "knows his" effect students tend to get more opportunities, and one opportunity leads to another until one day, a headhunter is as impressed by your leader ship experience, he offers you the corner office. That's had news for those born in the summer, because that's grade school starts now policies, they're among the youngest in their class. Just 38 per cent of the CEOs of Standard & Poor's top 500 firms celebrate birthdays between July and September—even though you'd expect 25 per cent to have birth days in those three months.

But there's an interesting twist: while CEOs born during the summer are fewer in number, those who do make it, despite being younger than the competition as they were growing up, tend to become the best performers. By surveying 349 companies, Lert, along with grad students Qingqian Du and Jiaojiao Zhang, discovered that the most successful of firms with bosses born in the summer is those 40 to 49, higher than the average. That's a 10 percent increase in stock portfolio of companies with a CEO born in the summer.

Why are summer CEOs so successful? It's because they have spent their entire lives overcoming the selective age effect, says Lert. After a while, having to struggle against older opponents turns them into "potty wiser, pretty clever little pigs." ■

NEW CEOs are summer babies, but they're the successful ones



BY JOHN UNTCH • Researchers have known for ages that the little leaguers who are the oldest in their age bracket are most successful, because they're bigger and stronger than their younger teammates. But a new study shows that this advantage—called the "July effect"—applies to CEOs too.

Finally: the Bay is really changing



BIG NAMES are coming to HBC, and that means big changes too

BY JASON KIRBY • Considering its age old age of 198, the Hudson's Bay Company is looking remarkably sprightly these days. When U.S. private equity firm NDC Equity Partners snapped up the dowdy retailer last month, it wanted to "revitalize" the old landscape—and they're off to a quick start. This week the company appointed James Bock, a respected Canadian executive with experience at H&M Retailer and a luxury hotel Royal Bank, to lead HBC's Bay Division. Mark Bock, who spent two decades at Canadian Tire and Loblaw Cos., has been named head of Zellers. And going to that, Jeffrey Sherman, the former president of Polo Ralph Lauren, was named CEO of HBC. "They're on a roll," says Harrison Kinsley, a retail consultant in Toronto. "There will be seismic changes within the next 12 months."

We've heard this before, of course. When U.S. investor Jerry Zucker bought HBC in 2006, many thought he'd quickly turn the business. But HBC, plodded along until Zucker's death from cancer in April. The company's fortunes rose. Kinsley says HBC, selling its Home Outlets and Fields chain. The company also plans to build larger Zellers stores and may target the underperforming stores as a separate unit. That could be a good thing.

Most big changes will come in the Bay, too. NDC, which owns L&L Taylor in the U.S., will bring the high-end chain to Canada by replacing prime Bay locations, or creating high-end boutiques. L&L Taylor will be positioned at the two highest H&M Retailer, while the Bay will move upstairs. Some Bay stores will likely close outright, says Vancouver retail strategist David Lee Gray.

"I understand that the people who invested in HBC sold out," Gray says. "The new guys are going to bring some of an aggressive approach to what reinvention might look like." ■

DNA adds new twist to dating online

BY USMAN HOUSSEIN • The answer to true love can be found in your genes. At least that's what a new site called GenPartner.com claims. For 2009, the Swiss company promises to hook you up with your perfect mate using a sample of your DNA. The site says "love is no coincidence," and that genetic compatibility between you and your partner creates a better sex life, a higher fertility rate and healthier children.

The service, which launched this month, was inspired by a study at the University of Bern, Switzerland, where female volunteers sniffed men's T-shirts and rated them for attractiveness. The study found that women were most attracted toward men of one allele (HLA) (human leukocyte antigen) molecules were most different from their own. Research has shown that we prefer mates with different HLA genes because it helps in producing offspring with stronger immune systems.

GenPartner.com simplifies the process by analyzing saliva samples to produce unique 3D numbers based on customers' DNA. The numbers for two partners can be plugged into an online algorithm system for a compatibility reading.

According to GenPartner, your split can lead you to love

Tarun Arora, managing director of GenPartner, says that rather than building on one dating site, the company will partner with existing ones that could let customers include GenPartner 1D numbers in their profiles. "The goal is to make it complementary to dating sites," he says.

Still, the company, which launched with US\$200,000 in seed money from investors, has been approached by two more dating sites. In the first nine days of operation, it signed up more than 270 customers.

My Elly, an online advertising analyst at Jupiter Research, says the US\$199 million online dating industry is showing signs of saturation when it comes to new users, so sites will need to extract more money from existing customers. Unique services, such as the one offered by GenPartner, could be the way to do that. "As saturation took it should get more strategic," he says. "But to achieve that I need big partners." ■



GO FORTH AND PRAY, COMRADE

History's largest religious revival is unfolding in China, and the government is smiling on it

BY PAUL WERTER • On almost any day, the scene outside Shanghai's Jade Buddha Temple could easily be confused with a major celebrity event. Limousines clog the curbside, and sophisticated urbanites (see sidebar) wait in line to get a glimpse of the temple's most famous resident. Inside the temple's courtyard, yellow walls, intricate, Manchu-style roofs, and a large, ornate gatehouse stand as a testament to the temple's long history. For the past 20 years, the temple has been a place of quiet reflection and prayer. But in the last few years, the temple has become a place of quiet reflection and prayer. But in the last few years, the temple has become a place of quiet reflection and prayer.

of repression. "This is gold in time for religion in China," he proclaims. A member of the Chinese Communist party's central committee and one of the country's most powerful Buddhist leaders, Jue, at age 78, has already been a monk for 25 years. He recalls the aftermath of the five-year-long Cultural Revolution era. "We were educated as an atheist as a citizen, as an atheist," he recalls, "but when I entered a monastery as a child only a few years after the religious purge of the '60s ended, the '60s and '70s, China remained barren ground. Now the suburbs of Shanghai's pre-revolutionary Buddhist temple is a gathering showcase for religion with an estimated 40 million followers and a billion sympathizers to look up to in faith and courage." A few years ago the government closed a hospital to allow it to expand, Jue says. "If the government was afraid of us they would not let it expand. And we plan to keep expanding."

The temple in Shanghai's Jade Buddha

ADD RESERVE Handling the religious resurgence is a top government priority

Temple is far from an isolated affair. Across China, popular fervor for Buddhism is swelling. As the newly restored Yu Zang Jiang Temple in Shanghai's market quarter, where lives of monasticism are now leavened by comforts such as air conditioning in the eating hall, temple master Guo Jue says the situation is unlike anything he could have imagined 20 years ago. "In the 1970s we only had 30 or 40 temples here in Shanghai. In the 1980s, there were 70. After 2000 there were more than 20." Temple reconstruction is big business in other parts of the country as well. In the villages of central Fujian province, for instance, a recent survey by McGill University professor Kenneth Dean estimates that there is now one temple reconstruction for every 120 villages; residents can attend 150 days of religious celebration a year. China's main Buddhists and Taoists sites and festivals are arenas with crowds of pilgrims.

Christianity, too, is booming, with as many as 100 million new followers joining congregations annually. More Protestants attend church on Sundays in China than in western Europe, Protestantism's historic heartland, scholars say. Although the government severely restricts missionary activities, many American evangelist churches see China as a new frontier over state protection than Africa and the former Soviet Union.

Seeing past the numbers, China's religious revival can be called the largest religious resurgence in human history. It's a social transformation completely unprecedented in the history of the world, says James Miller, a professor of Chinese religion at Queen's University. Like many observers, he thinks China's economic liberalism is powering the resurgence. Freedom of belief partly flows from business freedom, Miller says. Growing numbers of Chinese hundreds of thousands of new millionaires since 1978 are credit the traditional gods for their good fortune in making their money, perhaps to suggest further blessing. "In old Chinese adage says, 'Three feet above the head there are gods,'" explains Yu Xiaowu, a former scholar who now chairs China's increasingly relaxed official policies as the country's minister of religion. "Even when Chinese people are not religious," he explains, "they still look up, they feel above there are gods."

Coming from the mouth of a communist, this is remarkable. Beijing represents an ideological commitment to atheism as a central tenet of Marxism, the government is famous for acts of religious repression, most notably involving the Peking Gong, a movement forcing millions of Buddhists, Taoists and

Confucians. But it's now attracting reflects a broader shift. In November, at a major meeting of top Communist officials from across the country held in the run-up to the Olympics, President Hu Jintao listed the Chinese government's top strategic priorities. Among the top five, managing the religious resurgence. That decision delighted Yu, whose status within the government has rapidly soared since he took over his first job as minister 10 years ago. Sporting a prominent Beijing Olympics, Yu drove home a talented minister. "If a society is to be a healthy one," he said, "there must be different ideas within it, including religious and non-religious beliefs, including different religions, including Buddhism and Christianity." Then, in slightly stilted English, he said of a rather revisionist notion: "Our respect for freedom of religion, its interests, is deeply rooted in our cultural tradition."

On the eve of the Beijing Olympics, Yu is an awe among Chinese officials practicing closed human rights concerns the fear of government to the country. As Yu's old allies say, "There are some problems, but foreign diplomats shouldn't worry about our country's building a harmonious society." Then, after declining an invitation to China's 2008 Olympic bid, the minister told junior officials in the provinces, suggesting that problems with religious freedom can mostly be traced to the failure of local officials to respect national laws.

No surprise, China's new found tolerance is a strategic move. With floods of Chinese seeking spiritual solace, new government policies are to encourage to promote national unity. "Religious should propel development and service social equality in such a possible, instead of causing problems," it said. "As the economy prospers, people become agitated. The people should be religious to be able to understand." According to analysts like Miller, Beijing hopes China's rising religious fervor will help cement national unity as a source of growing anger and division between urban and rural people, and rich and poor. "There is a natural belief in China. People used to believe in Confucianism. But that isn't the case anymore," Miller argues. "People are looking for alternatives. Religion is one of these. The government is using religion as a kind of lever to promote national unity, to promote Chinese culture, and to keep up its own support."

Religion can serve other needs. In Fujian province, on China's south coast, for instance, faith helps that the thousands of years old are flourishing under a guise of respect: restoration. The Chinese government's support partly because Fujian's faith spread long

A MILLION FOLLOWERS JOIN CHURCHES EACH YEAR. TEMPLE-CUM-HOTEL COMPLEXES ARE BOOMING.



UNDER CONSTRUCTION IS A MAJOR PROJECT IN AID OF THE U.S. EVANGELICALS ARE NOW TARGETING CHINA.

ago to Taiwan and elsewhere in Asia, explains Lin Geping, a professor of religion at Fudan University. "We need to have a new vision of Chinese civilization. That's why we have a flexible religion policy. Religion builds bridges." This analysis drives as the first time Yu, a Buddhist monk who directs the University of Hong Kong Center of Buddhist Studies. "The government gradually understands that diversity of faith is very important," says Jue, "and also that it is useful for economic development."

It's worth noting that China has a political history in which religious revival—led by Buddhist, Taoist and other sects—have often helped to trigger domestic regime change, including the last dynastic regime. And so lawmakers have openly encouraged religious freedom. Only five faiths—Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism—are legal. All forms of religious observance and culture are treated by largely left of

religion. Religious forums are closely monitored by overbearing members of police. The masters of the temples may be monks, but they answer to masters of a wholly different type in Beijing.

In fact, Yu says, the sudden surge in religious fervor, and the flood of cash into the temples, justify government intervention in every aspect of Chinese religious life. "Money flows endlessly into the temples," he notes. "In the past, people went to the temple to burn incense sticks, and the temples could not earn money." Now, because of the problem of "overflowing money," the ministers, monks have to accept supervision after getting rich. They cannot become corrupt. "Under this regime, the day will come for when the masters of the temples would dismiss political questions."

But Jue warns that government coverage must of religious resurgence may undermine the spiritual integrity of the temples and monasteries. He worries especially about the growing commercialism within many temples and of Shanghai's Jade Buddha, which has a busy website and popular outreach programs. Under government oversight, the Jade Buddha sits like those on Peking island, home to many ancient monasteries, are being redesigned around tourism, not just temples and temples. "The market economy is seriously hurting the religious nature of the monasteries," says Jue. "Little time has been spent on teaching and meditation, to the extent that the core religious functions of monasteries are in danger of becoming merely decorative."

For Chinese Buddhists with roots in the faith going back through the centuries, the changes are unsettling. Zhang Jin, a 58-year-old Buddhist who lives in a two-story house and works in a temple park on Peking island as a gardener, says although the changes are raising some of the old's charms, he welcomes Buddhism's change of fortune. "I'm happy that more and more people now believe in Buddha," he explained on a stroll along the beach with his 60-year-old grand daughter and her friends. And government policy, he suggests, isn't entirely correct religion. "During the Cultural Revolution, all the temples have been destroyed. They destroyed the Buddhist. But we still pray." ■



GURU LADY OF THE TELEVISION CABINET

A Filipino family was astonished to find TBS' glossy images of the Virgin Mary on the glass doors of their living room entertainment center after they closed it. After failing to rub the images out, the family started praying to the saint, and the images started appearing. It, including video images, which is followed her own throat. Now the glass has become a community shrine that the Catholic Church has promised to investigate.

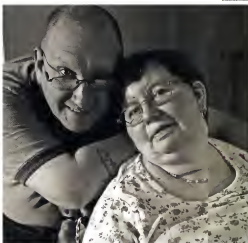
CAN THE LITTLE BLUE PILL TREAT A STROKE?

Viagra's newest uses may be nothing short of revolutionary

BY ALEXANDRA BRIMO / A 46-year-old woman, René Jarinski is not your typical Viagra user. In fact, to understand why she and some other stroke victims have been prescribed the drug off label, it's best to go back to the summer of 2000. At 5 a.m. on July 25, pain in it was getting tight. Jarinski, a nurse, awoke and realized that she could not move. Her legs, torso, arms and facial muscles were completely paralyzed. She could hear her husband getting ready for work at the Ford Motor Co. in Detroit, but she could not move her lips, catch her cell out. She had been sleeping on the white leather couch in the living room—the bed broken up in the middle of the night and hadn't wanted to wake her husband by returning to their bed room—and so when he came to the rescue and asked if she was okay, she lay still and stared at him intently. The only conscious motor-neuron function that had not failed was her ability to blink. In reality, she was very far from well; she was not only paralyzed, she was having a major stroke. She was mute, aware, but unable to communicate—she was experiencing what's called "locked-in syndrome."

The condition is extremely rare; although exact numbers are unknown, it's estimated that 500 people in the world are living with this almost complete paralysis. Of those, about 10 percent recover some limited voluntary movement—some wiggling of their fingers or toes. Most cases remain only by blinking or coughing eye movements. The condition was documented beautifully in the film and book, *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, which the author, Jean-Dominique Bauby, editor-in-chief of French Elle before he had a stroke, dictated by blinking at a list of letters read out by his assistant.

On realizing that something was seriously wrong with Jarinski, her husband, Roger, called 911 and then followed the ambulance to the local hospital. For four days, he lived



A BRAIN UNLOCKED A stroke left René Jarinski with "locked-in" syndrome, "made famous" by a book by French Elle editor Jean-Dominique Bauby (right). She's made a dramatic recovery.

by her bedside. By that time, Roger, 58, was desperate. His wife, who had four children from her previous marriage, was still completely paralyzed, and neurologists assured the wife's going to get any better, they had offered to "make her comfortable," by easing her way into death. "We are both Christians, so we wouldn't try anything else," he says. On the fifth day, she was transferred to

Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit for experimental treatment that a doctor friend of the family had heard about through word of mouth. A neurologist there, Montreal-born Brian Silver, and his colleague Michael Chopp, a neuroscientist, had been doing research, finding, incidentally, better known by its trade name Viagra, to restore that had had strokes. Although they had never tried the treatment on humans, they offered to give Jarinski high

doses of the drug, at three times what is prescribed for sexual dysfunction.

Since 2001, Silver and Chopp have been studying and experimenting with sildenafil. Working with mice and rats, they would induce strokes and test how quickly the animals recovered with and without the drug. The rodents were then put through a battery of functional and memory tests. Some were covered in bandages, orange markers, and timed on how long it took them to pick them off, others were trained to find food pellets and balance beams. In addition, the doctors probed

philosophy their floating tube, Jarinski started being able to move her head from side to side. About an inch later, she was able to move her fingers and her arm a little. After nine months, she was able to smile, and very gently move her legs at the knees from side to side. After a year, she began to recover her speech. "It's amazing," Silver remarked in an interview with *Maclean's*. "The brain mending stroke patients for 12 years, and I've never seen this sort of recovery before."

Of course, given that Jarinski was the first human stroke victim to take the drug, it's

become obvious, explains Silver. Jarinski could have been an ideal participant in the testing of Alzheimer's or dementia, or anywhere else that affects cognitive impairment, but none of these applications have yet been tested, says Chopp. "There are no other massive treatment for the brain," explains Chopp. "This one is really remarkable."

Following the success of the animal trials, Silver and Chopp have now started Viagra trials on human stroke victims, which are still in the safety testing stage. Some doctors read about Jarinski's story—it was published in the

Canadian Journal of Neurological Sciences in 2006—and have put their own stroke patients on Viagra, off-label. They report "remarkable" improvements, says Chopp, although so far the evidence is purely anecdotal.

As the first patient to try this therapy, Jarinski has made a remarkable, if incomplete recovery. She has regained some movement in one hand—the one type, and is writing a memoir about the experience of being locked-in. She has regained limited use of her voice—the words slowly and softly, although the sometimes trails off over multisyllabic words because she is unable to get up from her wheelchair, or dress or feed herself, she lives in a nursing home, 540 km from her old home. Although she is now no longer taking the medication, since the doctors reported were prohibitively expensive, she has reached what had finished, she continues to make improvements in her speech and articulation, five years after the stroke that paralyzed her.

Silver sees her every three to six months, and writes encouraging emails. "Dr. Silver has told me I will walk again by Christmas," Jarinski says. "He always tells me that no matter what state of year it is." It's clear that she doesn't quite believe him, but she's confounded so many expectations and made so much progress, she refuses to give up hope. ■



SHE WAS AWAKE, AWARE, BUT ALMOST TOTALLY PARALYZED. SHE WAS EXPERIENCING LOCKED-IN SYNDROME.

what was happening made the brain recovering blood flow with HDAs and brain activity by causing the difference in neuron production (Neurons are necessary to process memories and process information.)

Two studies conducted over seven years reported the findings: sildenafil coated the animals to produce more neurons, more synaptic connections and to regrow the nerve cells in the brain damaged by the stroke. The Viagra did rodents recovered more quickly from the stroke-induced brain injury: they were smarter, more coordinated, and had better memory function than the control group. Another study put elderly rats on Viagra, and they had better motor-neuron skills than rats that hadn't taken the drug.

Two months after being fed the first crushed

responsible to know for certain if it was the sexual dysfunction drugs that caused her recovery, says Silver. Jarinski was switched to Cialis after two years, which is part of the same family of medications, but works out cheaper for high doses.) Viagra dilates blood vessels, which is why it helps erectile dysfunction and helps flowers stand upright. The dilating effect brings more blood to the brain, which may help the organ heal itself. The drug also encourages the brain to produce more neurons—gray matter—by pharmacologically stimulating stem cells to

replenish. In Christmas stories, the medicine may have relieving symptoms of arthritis. An Indian version of the resin yields an extract known as a chemical called HDAs. Scientists at a California university gave a test group capsules of the extract. After a week, subjects reported a reduction in pain and stiffness associated with osteoarthritis. In addition, fluid drawn from joints showed a reduction in enzymes associated with the condition.

TONICS

A BIBLICAL CHRISTMAS WITH THE GIFT TO HEAL?
Celebrated in Christmas stories, the medicine may have relieving symptoms of arthritis. An Indian version of the resin yields an extract known as a chemical called HDAs. Scientists at a California university gave a test group capsules of the extract. After a week, subjects reported a reduction in pain and stiffness associated with osteoarthritis. In addition, fluid drawn from joints showed a reduction in enzymes associated with the condition.



TABLE TENNIS TEMPEST

The best players come from China. And that can be a problem.

BY ALEXANDRA BRIMO • Elite Canadian table tennis athletes are similar to many of our imported goods: they too come from China. Four of the five athletes representing Team Canada at the Olympics were originally from this Asian superpower. At the top of our national rankings now, Chinese players dominate. They represent seven of the top 10 men's table tennis athletes, and six of the best 10 women. Canada is by no means alone in this situation. All of Team U.S.A.—both men and women—were trained in China, and moved to this continent as adults.

One reason for this hegemony is China's mass production table tennis athletes as if they were going out of style. Since the sport was first introduced to the Summer Olympic Games in 1988, Chinese players have won 14 of the 30 available golds. They also lead in the world rankings: the top four men in the world are from China. The best male player in the world, 24-year-old Wang Hao, who holds his regular like a pair of chopsticks in white-knuckled and the penholder grip, has been No. 1 in the world for 10 straight months, and is widely expected to win gold at this

summer's Games. For the women, the situation is even more pronounced: all of the best five women in the world are Chinese, and many of the world's competitors and with the team winning all the available medals.

Since the Chinese are so much better at Ping-Pong than the rest of the world, there are lots of top-notch players in China who aren't good enough to play for the national team, but could crush the competition outside China. What this leads to is "Ping-Pong immigration," explains Tony Kwan, a Chinese general of Table Tennis Canada, with last-year's top-notch Chinese players switching allegiance, and moving abroad to represent another country. "You go to school between Poland and France," says Don Scuderi, a coach of the U.S. men's team, "and it's just Chinese players playing against each other."

This situation is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, Ping-Pong immigration brings talent into countries like Canada and improves the overall quality of the game. Athletes and coaches are awarded funding according to their results on the international circuit, so it's important to have the best in the country regardless of where they were trained. But when the top open go to represent Chinese immigrants, there is less of an incentive to develop homegrown talent, says Ron Schwab, executive director of the

Marathon Table Tennis Association.

And Canadian-born players find it harder to compete and win. Once they have their passport sorted, Chinese players find they can start dominating national competitions. And on the international circuit, they "definitely dominate" of the Canadian-born players, says Edna Tremblay, the lead coach of Club Tops de Basingstoke, one of the best table tennis clubs in Quebec. While this may be great for international rounds, it can leave players discouraged and frustrated, he adds.

Eighteen-year-old Shen Qiang says he arrived in Canada in 2004, and shortly thereafter began winning Canadian junior competitions. This summer he will be a junior representative of the Canadian Olympic team. While he didn't immigrate explicitly to further his table tennis career (he came with his family, who live in Toronto), he is pleased with Table Tennis Canada's sports program, and is looking forward to the full opening of the new 24-hour training centre in Ottawa, so he can work harder on his game. Born in Jin, an southeast China, Shen first picked up a paddle at nine. By age 13, he had left home and spent school summers in Harbin, a city 1500 km away, to train full time and represent the province of Heilongjiang. The competition in China was extremely intense, he says. The athletes trained six hours a day, five days a

week, they were paid to train full time and compete, he says. "In China, it's very competitive because if you don't make results then you will be taken off the team, and if you don't have table tennis and no school, there is no future for you."

Although this sounds extreme, it is a sport system other countries are eager to observe and understand. To learn how to compete against the best, many countries, including Canada, have their best table tennis players train for a few weeks or longer in China. While the Chinese government won't provide access to their very best athletes, often because they can provide amateur opportunities. Twenty-year-old Pierre-Luc Bouché is a full-time Canadian athlete, and in his attempt to make it to Beijing (which he just missed), he has attended a number of these Chinese table tennis camps. In the summer of 2004, he went to one in Zhengjiang, a historical city three

hours from Shanghai. The International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) has decided to step in and change the competition rules. Starting in September, there will be new eligibility criteria: if a table tennis athlete immigrates, he or she will have to wait a period of time before representing a new nation, depending on the athlete's age. Players under 15 will have to wait three years before competing for their new country. This age increases to the years for players between 15 and 18, and seven years for players 18 to 21 years of age. Over 21, a player can never play for a different country in certain international events. Most countries supported the new rules, says Ron Schwab.

'IT WAS EMBARRASSING. SOME CHINESE PLAYERS WOULD MAKE FUN OF US. WE JUST WANTED TO LEAVE.'



WANG RONG (LEFT), 24, is No. 1 in the world. Pierre-Luc Bouché, 26, trains in Montreal, Que., of course.



hours southeast of Beijing. The camp was hard work, emotionally difficult and draining. He ate, slept, and did his food, and the intensity and six-hour-a-day training schedule were grueling. The Canadians weren't even playing against the national team, but they were still out there, says Bouché, who was ranked first in Canada at the college level in the time, but a new national ninth at a senior level. "It was embarrassing," he adds. Even the top Canadian players could not keep up against the Chinese. "What made it worse was that the Chinese players would laugh at the Canadians when they stated the ball. Some players were concerned, but others would make fun of it. It was like we were beginners," he says. "They can do that because they are the best in the world, but for us, it was just so hard to learn and come home."

To give other players a chance to compete and to tackle "Ping-Pong immigration," the

chairman of the table tennis committee for the ITTF "Something had to be done to develop younger table tennis athletes and not just bring adult athletes in from China," he says. (Unlike their success on the courts, the Chinese do not dominate the International Table Tennis Federation, an organization on a one-on-one try-and-see basis.)

Canada was one of the countries in favour of the eligibility restrictions, says Ron Schwab. Many countries were importing Chinese Ping-Pong stars, but training camp and all

ing their racks with these elite players. This was more common in Europe, where players earn big paychecks in professional leagues. Countries like Canada that refused to do this were being put at a disadvantage, he says, and the new legislation gives all countries the same set of rules. (Table Tennis Canada will not track the citizenship of Ping-Pong stars. However, athletes mostly play in Canadian competitions, and get a national ranking before the three- to five-year process is complete.)

Regardless of whether after Europe, many believe the rules will reshape the Canadian Ping-Pong landscape. Eighteen-year-old Marie-André Lévesque left home at 11 to compete at high-level table tennis, moving from the small town of Miramichi, Que., to Quebec City, where he lived with his family, then Montreal, where he studied with his physical education teacher so he could attend an elite sports school. Although he has devoted the greater part of her life to table tennis, he is among the players who find it difficult to compete against the Chinese-trained athletes who dominate the Canadian rankings. Currently, he is ranked 22nd in the Canadian rankings and 11th for the world. He has been ranked as the 1997 (St. Salvador) Junior Open, where he finished fifth in the doubles event and sixth in the singles event. He trains 2½ hours a week, at the Centre de haute performance in table tennis de Montreal, and makes thousands of dollars from sponsorships. It's not enough, however, to cover the costs of the flights, the accommodation, and the entrance fees to international competitions, he says, and his parents also contribute several thousand dollars to the cost of his training. Having received so much, she is looking forward to the implementation of the new rules. "It will give a chance for Canadian-born players to be on the team. It will be fair people like me to play for Canada." ■



A BOY SO STRONG HE GIVES CARS A LIFT
 Kyle Reynolds, 15, has been named the winner of a national contest. He has a unique driving program that recruits 10-year-olds such as a 1.4-ton Nissan. Weighing 210 lb., Kyle won the competition by picking up 78-kg keys seven times, lifting 33-kg truck tires and carrying 55-kg barrels across a field. His superhuman abilities make him popular. Kyle says: "Everybody seems to like it when I lift their cars."

MASKS? AT THE OLYMPICS?

As one athlete puts it, **'this is about sport, not fashion'**

BY ALEXANDRA KIRINO • When long-distance runner Jian Bennett arrives in China later this month, he will need to decide whether to spend most of the Olympic Games wearing a mask. The 43-year-old athlete, who is ranked first in Canada in the 50-km distance, will make his final decision once he breathes in the now-toxic air being sent "It's a respiratory problem once I get to the city, I say get me one and try to stay inside," says Edmonton-based Bennett.

Canadian authorities have decided to issue carbon filter masks, which remove particulate matter, to all athletes who request them during the Games. Some athletes have already decided to wear the clunky-looking contraptions. Mountain biker Seanus McGrath, 33, ordered his a few weeks ago, and has worn it around his Victoria house to get used to it. He even left biking in it, but his face got hot and sweaty, and he couldn't get enough airflow through it. Still, he will wear it on for the duration of the Games, adding it only when he's competing or training. Although the mask is uncomfortable, McGrath believes it will improve his performance. An estimated one in six Olympic athletes has cardiovascular asthma, according to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, including McGrath, and while these people the air quality could aggravate their medical problems at a critical moment. "I'm not concerned with how I look," explains McGrath, a member of the Tim Hortons national cycling team. "This is about sport, not fashion."

Chinese authorities have insisted masks won't be necessary. The country has spent US\$10 billion on anti-pollution measures, including forcing major factory relocations off the streets and successfully closing hundreds of factories in surrounding provinces. About one in 30 physicians have been found to have never been fitted with devices to reduce



'WHEN YOU WEAR A MASK, YOU ARE BASICALLY SAYING YOU STINK,' SAYS ONE U.S. OFFICIAL

fumes. Authorities may even ban 90 per cent of Beijing's cars on bad days. "When people get polluted, they'll see they won't need a mask," says Jeff Buffalo, a senior adviser to the Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee.

Still, the air quality has upset competitors in the past—how often that's made some athletes ill during pre-Olympic competitions held in China. That prompted Canadian authorities to try out a number of devices, before choosing a simple carbon filter, which can be worn at rest, rather than during strenuous exercise. While the masks remove particulate matter, they don't filter the high levels of nitrogen dioxide or ozone, which can also cause lung problems.

Masks have been issued to about 20,000 athletes so far. The British have developed one that can be used at rest and during exercise. Initially the devices were to be worn in competition, but this is now strongly discouraged, in part because it would be seen as an insult to the Chinese hosts. "When you

SEANUS McGRATH has been wearing a mask in Victoria to get used to it.

wear a mask, you are basically saying you stink," explains Scott Schmitz, performance director of the U.S. marathon team.

Every athlete on Team USA has been issued with a specially developed, high-tech filter. (Some members of the U.S. cycling team arrived in Beijing earlier this week wearing the black respiratory masks, causing a spokesperson for USA Cycling to state the athletes weren't trying to make a statement.) Details about the U.S. masks are being kept very secret, some experts believe the healthiest approach is partly to create a psychological advantage over the competition. "This is the game before the Games," says Robert McCormack, chief medical officer for the Canadian Olympic Committee.

Whatever the device, Canadian athletes will likely have last season to wear one during competition from other countries. Officials have decided the best way to address the air quality issue is to remove athletes from the city altogether. The track and field teams will spend much of the Games in Beijing, with most flying into Beijing just a few days before their competition. The soccer, freestyle, and swimming teams will also be housed in the Asian city, which has similar but not as bad humidity, but much less pollution. The far fewer ice and para-ice teams will be in Harbin, and the water polo teams in Nanjing. "We wanted to get them in a protected environment without the stress and extra distractions that happen during the Olympic Games," McCormack explains.

Stepping in Beijing, Bennett believes, far away from the smog and dust of the Chinese capital, is a much better solution. "This is an event the whole world is watching. If the competitors show up at the opening ceremony covering their faces, it will be a slap in the face for our hosts." ■

WHAT HIPPO WOULD WILDCORP A DENTIST'S VISIT?

There are no hard feelings at the Denver Zoo after Mahal, a five-year-old hippo, clomped on a zoo worker's hand during training. Keepers were trying to demonstrate the hippo to having hands and dental instruments inside his mouth, when he let a keeper's hand. She hugged him on the nose and Mahal opened his mouth. The keeper spent the morning at a hospital having a small wound cleaned while a chastened Mahal had a massage in the sand.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREGG LUTHER



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A NOVEL CANDIDATE

Award-winning writer Tom King is running for the New Democrats

BY LEANNE DEBBIE • There's this story Tom King likes to tell. It's about the Liberals and the Conservatives, and how they're a lot like the pair of brother farmers who used to court his uncle's Grand Nana, back when King was a child, and the two women ran a beauty shop out of a converted barn.

"The story goes something like this one of Nana's sisters was a stiff who drove a Cadillac and berated her to tears. The other was an easygoing cat in a Corvair. Nana used to terrorize both and finally between the two, unless which was the bigger pain on the neck, until King's mother finally said to her, 'Nana, maybe it's time for a new relationship.'"

"When I look at the Conservatives and Liberals, I say it's time for a new relationship," King told a delighted crowd last week at his campaign kickoff evening in Guelph, Ont. "And I'm available for a date."

After years of caping from NDP Leader Jack Layton, King has finally agreed to represent the party in the Sept. 8 federal by-election in his adopted hometown, a Liberal stronghold for the past 15 years.

There's an advantage to running for public office in the age of 65, after having already forged a career as an award-winning writer, broadcaster, satirist, children's book author, screenwriter, native rights activist, environmentalist and Order of Canada recipient: none here, winning the job at all tends to resemble like King's recent candidacy.

Having spent decades fighting for social justice issues on the grassroots level, he used "his shift politics," he calls it, as his chance to help other same unequally policy changes in this country. "What I really want to do on this campaign is get everybody excited about politics again," he says. "It's fun! It's really it. I've got some great stories. Think of me as your court jester who you want to go."

Indeed, Layton describes King, the author of fictional works including *Green Green, Running Water*, and the creator of CBC's *The Dead Dog Café Comedy Hour*, as "Canada's best storyteller." One wouldn't think the political scene needs any more storytellers. But anyone familiar with King's work knows that he uses his stories on *Dead Dog* as a fictional Alberta native communi-



KING CAMPAIGNS in Guelph, Ont. "I want to get everybody excited about politics again!"

ty—as a powerful medium for giving voice to various political ideas and grievances, all with a humour that lands gently, but cuts deeply. And in this way he is perfectly in tune with his public office. "Here's one little story," he tells the captivated audience at his bedtime oration: voice. It's about 50-year-old Tina's "revenue neutral" Green Shift program. "I'm reminded of a guy with a horse," he says. "He finds that horse tap on one end, then walks to the other end and checks to see if he got the same amount of tap out—and in the same form."

Following some glad handing over wine and cheese, King—his Order of Canada pin fastened to his lapel—prepares for an inaugural round of door-to-door canvassing alongside the leader. At six foot six, King towers

over Layton. Together they call to mind the toric and all the King: King is gentle, matured, understated; Layton is brassy, scrappy, and almost musically energetic. "Till these you some tricks," Layton tells a team of freshly-faced volunteers, ushering them into the foyer of a locked subsidised housing building. King hangs back for a moment—he can't help but be reminded of his youthful stint as a door-to-door encyclopedia salesman, you never know what's waiting for you on the other side of that door. "You don't know who you're talking to. What their concerns are. You don't want to disturb anyone."

Inside the complex, Layton has all the self-confidence and efficiency of a high-end realtor. "I'm finding in more second-point of community with each resident." That's why

mother's name") An Layton charges down the balcony, King follows behind in a long, powerful stride, and considers the life of a candidate: all these years he's been broadcasting his political views, he says. But then, he was representing only himself. Now he's representing a state, an issue party, and a philosophy. "It's a little nervous from time to time," he says, "but I've been on the national stage for over two decades now. And Ottawa certainly doesn't hit any fear for me."

Walking here with his political concerns—many of which are quite national to find a look-alike in their doorstep—you're reminded that he is, after all, a skilled public personality. His much self-deprecating jokes when he finds himself speaking to the chicks of getting dogs and waving babies. He smiles

'I SAID TO MYSELF, I WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINMENT AGAIN. FROM THEREON OUT, I CLEANED UP MY ACT.'



over to give him a ring at home with any problem or concern. "If you're being brave, look me up in the white pages. I'm there."

King's gift for storytelling is buoyed by a storied personal history. Born in central California in 1949 to a Greek mother and a Chinese father, King was raised in a poor community "on the other side of the tracks." His father, Robert King, abandoned the family when he was three, and King was raised by his mother. Only in his late thirties did he find out that his father had, in fact, loved his life in Illinois, married again twice, fathered seven more children, and died after falling into a river and hitting his head. "He had never mentioned it. He had just sort of walked away, dumped us in a trash can off the side of the road, and never looked back. I really felt deserted by him."

King worked a series of seasonal jobs in his youth on a sugar cane plantation in Australia, for instance, and building good ties in northern California. In the late sixties, inspired by the civil rights movement, he became active in the rights issues in the United States, adopting an in-your-face, charged style, and making campaign speeches as a composite of native jargon. "It was sort of a combination of racism and traditionalism," he says. "We'd wear our hair long, with headbands, leathers, fringes, four-strand braid chokers. We were party away."

A defining moment in his political evolution came when he was a fellow with the "Redneck" group—a group of young men in a California university, along with two more from the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, in suits. "We got up there and I said: 'We're the good guys and bad,' 'Native rights' and 'You bastards are keeping us down,' and everything was true, but I was totally a foolhardy." They were followed by the two men in suits, who were not only well-dressed, complete with overcoats. At the end of the session, a woman from the university presented the two men in suits with business cards. When King asked why he hadn't received one, the woman said, "Those guys were the experts." "What are we, the entertainment?" King asked. The answer came in the form of a handwritten note: "I said to myself, I will not be entertained again. From thereon out, I cleaned up my act."

Also, he has already endured his first taste of the nasty side of campaigning. Somebody—from one of the other parties, he says—defaced one of his signs by putting an American flag on it, to let people know he was born and raised in California. It's a criticism he's heard before: how Canadian is Tom King? And of course because I'm Cherokee, my ancestor is also, "Well you know, when your ancestor came over here, my ancestor came down to the shores to protect them." It's one of these silly puns as politics that get played.

Politics aside, amongst his neighbours, King is well-known for connecting with all sorts of humans. Recently, the bookish local bookstore, held a fundraiser for an adult literacy course. King volunteered to be the lucky man that night. Don Evans, a bookish staff member, asked that King had a large glass punch tray to his neck. When he inquired about it, he learned that King had had open throat surgery only days earlier. Also, he had pneumonia—and his daughter Elizabeth, now 19, was in intensive care after experiencing severe complications during the birth of her son, Xavier, who was 10 weeks premature. "I said to him, 'You know, you're already a good guy. You can take some time off.' Don said that King just cracked a joke and gave his snoring, his voice rather hoarse."

"It's like some things," King says in hindsight. "If you're not dead, you do it." M

'I KEEP SAYING ONE OF MY KIDS PUNCHED ME. I'M TOO EMBARRASSED TO SAY IT WAS A PUFFIN.' —CELEBRITY CHEF GORDON RAMSAY, ABOUT CERTAIN ICELANDIC DELICACY THAT FOUGHT BACK

KING SIAOSE TUPOU V SILE AND FUR FOR A TROPICAL COMBINATION

Though his kingdom of Tuvalu is tiny, King Siaose Tupou V has a reputation for being one of the world's poorest monarchs. But his reign is anything but dull. The 60-year-old king has a love for the outdoors and a passion for the arts. He has a collection of over 100 paintings and a library of over 1,000 books. He is also a keen sportsman and has been known to play tennis and golf. In 2006, he was crowned King of Tuvalu at a ceremony in his capital, Funafuti. He is the 11th monarch of the country and has reigned since 2006.



THE KING OF TUVALU

BRAD ZIEGLER OUT OF THE MONROES, INTO THE RECORD BOOKS

It didn't grab headlines like Barry Bonds' record-breaking home run chase, but Brad Ziegler of the Oakland Athletics has captured one of baseball's longest-standing records. Last week, the 38-year-old rookie pitcher from Kansas took the mound for the Oakland Athletics and pitched a perfect game, throwing nine innings without allowing a hit or a run. It was the first perfect game since 1905, when Dwight Gooden pitched for the New York Giants. Ziegler's performance was a historic moment for the Athletics and for baseball in general.



THE KING OF TUVALU

NANCY GRACE A TV ATTACK DOG UNDER ATTACK

The former U.S. prosecutor is losing the celebrity life. Aside from her main job as hostess of a sensational crime show on CNN Headline News, Nancy Grace is enjoying a second career as a pundit on various talk shows. She has been a frequent guest on the Fox reality show *The Contender*, where she competed against other celebrities. However, her career has been hit by controversy. In 2006, she was accused of sexual harassment by a former colleague. She has since denied the allegations and has continued to work on her television career.



THE KING OF TUVALU

LUDACRIS DIVING GRABBA A REALLY BAD RAP

It's well known that hip hop is a form of self-expression, but Ludacris is taking it to a new level. In a recent interview, he revealed that he has a secret talent for diving. He said that he has been diving since he was a child and that he has won several competitions. He also mentioned that he has a collection of diving gear and that he has been teaching others how to dive. Ludacris is a multi-talented artist who is not only a rapper but also a diver.



THE KING OF TUVALU

GORDON RAMSAY CLIMBY CHIEF SHOULD SWEAR OFF PUFFINS

You can imagine what the Scottish food-mad chef Gordon Ramsay said as he plunged his fork into a chef's head. Ramsay was in Ireland for a cooking show and was looking for a new recipe. He decided to try a dish called "Puffin Head," which is a traditional Irish dish made from the head of a puffin. Ramsay was not a fan of the dish and said that he would never eat it again. He also mentioned that he was allergic to puffins and that he had a bad reaction to the dish.



THE KING OF TUVALU

BRIAN UTLEY MAKING A VERY BIG SPLASH

He's Canada's most well-known athlete, but Brian Utley is also a professional athlete. He has been a professional athlete for over 10 years and has won several championships. He is currently a member of the Canadian national team and is competing in the 2008 Summer Olympics. Utley is a versatile athlete who can compete in a variety of sports, including swimming, water polo, and basketball. He is a role model for young athletes and is known for his dedication and hard work.



THE KING OF TUVALU

RATE HUDSON HER LIFE IS A ROMANTIC COMEDY

She stars in a romantic comedy about a beautiful blond and two famous athletes. What, that's not a movie, that's Rate Hudson's real life. The day after the movie was released, Hudson was in a car accident and was injured. She was taken to the hospital and was in a coma for several days. She eventually recovered and is now back on her feet. Hudson's life is a true story of resilience and courage. She has overcome many challenges and is now a successful actress and model.



THE KING OF TUVALU

POJAMAN STINAWATRA CLOSING IN ON THAIKIN

She's the wife of one of Thailand's most influential men, former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra. But this woman came to court her husband when he was in prison. She was sentenced to three years in prison for evading \$16.7 million in taxes in a 1997 stock deal. She was released from prison in 2001 and has since become a prominent figure in Thai politics. She is known for her intelligence and her ability to navigate the complex world of Thai politics.



THE KING OF TUVALU



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taste

The Vancouver Indian feast restaurant Vitya is a top-of-the-food-chain kind of place—no doubt, still reviews, discerning patrons willing to wait hours for a table. So, in June, when proprietor Vidya Vaj and Menu Dishes introduced a new menu, a first breakfast from a creature so lovely it's often served underfoot, media outlets as far afield as France were about.

Publicity was never the intent, says Vitya. Rather, he and Dishes, his wife and Vitya's chef, were inspired by the environmental and nutritional benefits of insect eating. The article

earned our way through the food chain a far-crying a rebuke of the Western palate. And with that, insect eating, or entomophagy, to use its loftier identifier, is inching onto the epicurean radar. The North American place was a tip-off, a 20th Anniversary restaurant in the Saint-Marcus district that has served insect-Taiwanese like fried crickets, Sergio-style scorpions with shrimp toast, and "Chambazetta," potato wings sprinkled with the tiny black pincer pests—since it opened in 1991. Adventurous Mexican restaurants have also brought indigenous delicacies like escamoles, ant larvae, into the culinary mainstream. When Kajiya in Dresden, Germany,

Elphanta, a bar in Providence, R.I., added silkworm chowder, cricket sobos and a crane beetle made soup. This year bug snacks to the masses. "Everybody who has tried them loves them," says owner and chef Joshua Seale. Chris Schaefer, 37-year-old director of operations, says interest in insect eating has exploded over the past few months. They've been deluged with media inquiries, and film crews from London and Paris have visited, he says.

Bug eating adherents have been skulking on the fringe since Vincent Van Gogh was 1845 (readers, why not eat insects? Now, with oil alone US\$130 a barrel and dire predictions about The End of Food, to echo the title of Paul Roberts' new book, they're seen as pragmatic, not eccentric). David George Gordon, the Seattle-based science writer and author of *The Eater's Bug Cookbook*, has been a tireless proponent of entomophagy for more than a decade. "Insects are the most valuable, underused and delicious animals in the world," says Gordon, who coauthored with Vitya's "Insected: The Art of a Bug Cook," he says of the process. "Because I was putting along bugs with dried crickets to give them an idea of what's available."

Lowly insects, once the staples of agriculture, are the forgotten food supply's new heroes, according to a symposium held in Taiwan in February, convened by the United

Nations to promote insect eating in developing countries as a solution to the global food crisis. Bugs' new status hangs on their eco-credentials: carbon footprint is tiny, of all species, they're the most energy-efficient consumers of food to produce. "Cows and pigs are the 90th, bugs are the 10th," says David Grais, a Providence-based English teacher whose second career as a high profile environmental advocate landed him on the Calvert Report in February. (Grais' former, until entomologist at the

Admission Intentional New Orleans, does the math. "You've got to find about 100 lb of grain to a cow to get one lb of edible beef. Insects are much better at that conversion, almost one to one," he says. Crickets deliver twice as much edible mass as pigs and almost as much as much as corn based on the same food input, says Grais. They also reproduce at a far faster rate. Their end-of-the-food-chain status means many are herbivores, not eating healthy, low fat diets.

Nutritionally, insects offer outperform

HAVE SOME CHOCOLATE CHIRP COOKIES

The dawning realization we've eaten our way through the food chain has put insect eating onto the epicurean radar BY ANNE KINGSTON

on, roasted and ground, are widespread in the diet, they're mixed in with chapati flour and seasoned with paprika, often the, salt and ground coriander. "It tastes like whole wheat bread," says Vitya, who says entomophagy has been generally positive. They're not adding adding other insect dishes, just a few grackles. "I'm not interested in a four factor menu," Vitya explains. "I want a menu that's well balanced and versatile that every one can enjoy."

Consuming insect—entomophagy—is a widespread Canadian restaurant would have been unthinkable a decade ago. Downing the army and army was the purview of survival gross-out challenges. Gastronomically, it was limited to the halcyon dining de expeditions of chef like Anthony Bourdain and Rasmus Feil's Andrew Zimmern. Exposure to what are dietary staples and delicacies in two-thirds of the world meant a visit to the lacustrine de Montreal with its displays of insect-worms in corned chili from South Africa, canned alligators chrysids from Africa, and queen ant were from China. Or attending insect-cooking events at natural history museums, urged to garnish media attention, which they did, who goes treating the event like a page from Ripley's Believe It or Not.

But the dawning realization that we've



PAK-PRIDE red square worms in Mexico: food evictions can be overcome, say experts. South was once resistant to many

put maggots, which are fly larvae, on the menu in 1995—in the cream, salad and cocktail—customers fled for a taste. Yokoichi, a midtown Manhattan Mexican restaurant, opened last year with a house specialty—a chapultepec taco, filled with whole dried grasshoppers.

Now, though, insects are no longer exotic specialties like the Colombian green ant hand-dipped in Belgian chocolate sold at Harrod's, or the scorpions available at the rarely more chain Super Martians. In June, Blue



PHOTO: NATHAN RICHARDS FOR ANNE KINGSTON; PHOTO: MICHAEL HENRI

traditional live-stock. Grasshoppers contain about 10 per cent protein and 50 per cent fat. The lovely cricket has sweetest nutritional value: each 100 g of dehydrated tenebrio has 1,590 mg of iron (five pounds daily require 1,500), 350 mg of calcium, and 15 mg of zinc. "Two hundred and fifty adult crickets equal 290 calories and only six grams of fat," says Gordon. "A cup of crickets mixed with other things in a meal" insects provide balanced nutrition, says Lomax, though this concept varies. (With their wooden diet, termites tend to be a bit heavy.) says. Though

NEALY/JOHN QUINN/REUTERS (left); author of *The Eat-a-Bug Cookbook*, David George Gordon



NUTRITIONALLY, INSECTS OFTEN OUTPERFORM TRADITIONAL LIVESTOCK

that watch a problem for Theo Reinhold, who survived four days in the Australian outback last month. Foraging on insects helped him survive by local Aboriginals. "Termites don't taste too bad," the 32-year-old former environmentalist told reporters.

Clearly the survival instinct can trump revulsion over consuming bugs knowingly. (Unknowingly, we swallow about a pound a year, in packaged food and airborne, says Gordon.) But this reflex is culturally conditioned, says psychologist Harriet Levy, who, with entomologist John Wood, a fellow professor at the King's University College in Edmonton, has been studying our aversion to eating bugs since 1995. "We incorrectly lump all bugs together," she says. "We see all arachnids, we associate them with bad hygiene, feces and disease with no nutritional analogy." There's also the association, the appendages, the word eyes, even though we cover other animals with these

"The culture that eat insects are not culture we are in," Levy says. The world of crickets is at 10% of a million. "Good preferences exist when people of status or status-makers enjoy that food," she says.

Entomologists agree there's much to learn about insects, though all agree on eating bugs live. At dinner, it's no no. "Gordon is judicious about which bugs he'll eat, sourcing them from known suppliers. 'You go buy [live] food supply, their role in the ecosystem and what entomologists know about them,'" he says. "Not in anyone suggesting all

insects be eaten. A culinary pathos is emerging: at the top, crickets, and to taste they will flower seeds on shrimp, hence their nickname "hard shrimp" (Japanese call them "mushi-insects," "mushi insects") and "hard shrimp" like "bag" associations, in the same way the term "sweetbread" coined association of the thyroid glands of animals.)

Gordon likes meat or "mush" bugs, named for their chemical defense sprayer. "They taste heavy and slightly bitter, a cross between kale and cilantro." Gordon

favours we worms, honeyed caterpillars, which he has frozen to make crickets. His signature dish is entomophagy, a worm pasta salad made with crickets. "One told me, 'This is way better than anything my mom makes,'" he says. Acceptance will come with exposure, says Lomax, whose "chocolate chip cookies" made with crickets mask the insects' texture and taste. And resistance is bound to wobble with the fermented cheese surrounding same bugs, puree, and even from Colombia, for example, are said to contain a natural form of Viagra and a proven rich defense against cancer.

Artificial farming too will boost insects' associations with food. Dutch researchers are using biotechnology to make produce and food delivery systems, which will deliver insects to the table via legs. The goal, Margareta Verheij of Wageningen University told Science News earlier this year, is to produce a sustainable source of bug protein that can be dried and added to bread or moulded into burger patties. (She'll do it if you want. But the arrival of President's Choice GreenGrocery's *Grubs and Lead Shrimp* and *Onco-Bite* by *Only a Taste of Nature*.)

ON THE WEB: For bug recipes visit www.eat-a-bug.com/buginfo



TODAY'S SPECIAL... PUZZY BEE DRINKS

A yellow fuzzy drink made from extracts from the head and bees of bees has become the hit of the summer in Japan. A spokesman for its manufacturer, the Japan Tobacco Co., says that "Mentha Bee" is a drink for "me who are exhausted by the summer heat." The drink stimulates the flavour of menthol-ess, which is a Japanese delicacy. Demand for this has grown so much that there have been cases of foreigner's heads fraudulently passed off as Japanese ones.

PHOTO BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

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FANS ARE INFATUATED by the onscreen breakups scripted for their loved couples, Ellen Pompeo and Patrick Despeyroux

Meredith and Derek forever. Please.

Hot show 'Grey's Anatomy' has turned bleak. Can't at least one relationship work out?

BY JAMIE J. WEISMAN

The title of the TV show *Grey's Anatomy* is a play on the title of a medical textbook. And when that book says "solid evidence is of smaller quantity," it might just as well be talking about the last two seasons of the show, where the marriage of two hasn't been solid at all. The medical drama about very people in a Seattle hospital—a first season of *ER*—was a huge success five years ago. It became one of the top five shows in North America, propelled largely onto the pop charts and made us forget that Patrick Despeyroux for making the weekly *Loverboy*. But now, as the producers work on its fifth season, the summer repeats are being overwatched by *Lost*, *Grey's Anatomy* is taking about how bad the season is. What makes a hit show burn out so fast? That's a question no medical textbook can answer.

Complaints about the writing on *Grey's* became big news last month when Katherine Heigl, who won an Emmy last year for playing an underwear model turned doctor, criticized the way her character had been written lately. "I did not feel that I was given the material this season to warrant an Emmy nomination." (The Emmy nomination that way shows the whole show, denying it a nomination for *Best Drama*.) But Heigl was late to the party, for the show had been complaining long before she did. Earlier this year, a petition was circulated to protest its transformation from "been having something exciting to something we don't even recognize."

Grey's Anatomy may have lost its sense of balance. It was an instant hit because of its combination of a bunch of different elements into an extraordinary mixture: it was a medical show, a romantic soap opera and a com-

edy all at once. What seemed to happen in the third and fourth seasons is that the show poisoned everything except the romantic angle, comedy but because harder to find, and the medical stories were limited to the occasional patient with a deadly problem, like swallowing marbles. (Find out, who runs greysonline.com, says that the writers may have lost sight of the importance of light comedy to the show's popularity. "People obviously want the drama, but I feel the show got a bit heavy when it became a medical for too long.") Creative Studio's Hines took to replacing the humor with soap opera clichés, the only show more outrageously soapy was *Grey's* much derided spinoff, *Private Practice*. The third season of *Grey's* ended with a wedding that got broken off after the guests had arrived, and introduced a long-lost half sister for Meredith Grey (Ellen Pompeo), while the fourth season featured Meredith constantly breaking up with Derek (Terry O'Quinn), who was the show's most beloved character as the ideal cop. On the other hand, it's not that Derek had ever been "the perfect man," and the marriage was a sad story for him to "be shell of his own man."

Grey's Anatomy can't take its moaning early signs of burnout. In fact, it's lacking: the most, since it's qualified as a hit. The same can't be said for *ER*, which spent its first

season as a global phenomenon, only to end its second season with the creator openly admitting that the show was trouble. *Grey's* network made *Desperate Housewives* just a memorable first season followed by a dismal second season. Each of these shows has displayed the same problems as *Grey's*, focusing more on the suffering of their characters than anything fun. (Hines himself says of *Grey's* that the network summed up the reaction when the show about why the was disappointed with the third season of *Grey's Anatomy*: "Some of us had a hard week and would have been much liked to have seen at least one of these couples have a happy-ish ending.")

With so many shows starting out huge and then imploding, some critics are starting to worry that the very act of getting popular is the creative loss of death. In TV, Matthew Gilbert wrote in the *Boston Globe* that "popularity ruined ABC's *Grey's Anatomy*, just as it ruined NBC's *Hillaries*." But on the other hand, just because a show has creative trouble doesn't mean it can't improve, the five episodes *Grey's* produced after the writers' strike were lighter in tone than the rest of the fourth season. Dan Snierson is trying to "bring back the humor," and that she and other fans are "really optimistic about the upcoming season." But even if *Grey's Anatomy* goes back into form, is there it as a cultural phenomenon as before? Katherine Heigl is now in *Grey's*, and after her decision to appear in *ER* (Drama, when has she been wrong?) M



ACCORDING TO TV — A CALIFORNIA EARTHQUAKE "There was a big earthquake today. It caused over \$2 million in improvements to Joan Rivers. The earthquake is still rattling through *Grease Alley*." — *Colin Hanks* "It was small, though you wouldn't know it. One thing was good about it. I, A., is making a big deal out of nothing. For example, *Paris Hilton*. The quake was powerful enough that a group lived up to its Ruben ended lived up to its *Hillaries*." — *Johnny Knoxville*

Let him burn his cello. He's wrong.

Only new arrivals, the golfer, has used a tank in a profile on the Times of London, story picked up by the CBC, Stronach said he was drinking of young Galloway. He is threatening to burn his office and a copy of Galloway's book in symbolic protest of what he is calling identity theft. And he'd like

The storm will pass and the book will stand or fall on its own merits. So let some one else burn his instrument. What Galloway really has to worry about is whether of his characters inspired by an actual person, one he says he tried to find but "may be dead." The woman he calls "Arrow" was a ruthless Russian agent. ■

Finally, a food bank for vegetarians

Joseph credits his Hindu vegetarian wife for drawing his attention to the plight of low-income vegetarians: "If you eat meat, you can eat vegetarian, and non-vegetarian. But if you are vegetarian, you only have one choice. I've had a dream for 10 years to open up a food bank for vegetarians only," he says. "For

Joseph purchases grocery stores to donate fresh fruit and vegetables. "I've got green vegetables, too many to name. Potatoes, onions, soups, tofu. I've asked for cooking oil but so far no one has donated that because it's a little bit expensive. We've got spices in little packets."

For those wondering what to do next with their vegetable food bank groceries, a web site called *Broke-Are Vegan* provides recipes. Up this week: roast carrots with beer and Egg McMuffins. ■

STOP THE PRESSES... CROSSWORD CONFUSION
Sometimes, newspaper classifications provide little remedy "Some critics of Wednesday's puzzle contain an outdated crossword puzzle and its solution. If you look here first, preened with reason if the answer in the solution to one across area appears in the puzzle above it, you have a paper with the wrong crossword. If the solution to one across matches Tuesday's puzzle, you're in the clear, and on your own."—New York Times, July 23

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The vegetarian food bank is non-profit and receives no government funding. Joseph gave out of his own pocket to rent the warehouse space, a two level unit in a strip mall.

Smith, who after talking to Joseph signed on as the new food bank's volunteer coordinator,



HOTTEST IMPROVED **FANELA ANDERSSON**
Yes, she seems plastic and a bit dense, but Andersson's care for Mother Earth is growing. After making a charity tour of Abu Dhabi, the starlet announced that she would be building a hotel in the Persian Gulf province, at the behest of the local royal family. "The royal family was really friendly," Andersson reports, adding that her hotel will be environmentally friendly. "It's built with no fossil fuel at all—in Abu Dhabi where they have all that oil!"



Publishers have bet a \$2.5-million advance on an unknown Winnipeg writer. Can he deliver?

So he went to Eric Blomoff, one of New York's most prominent agents. Blomoff thought there was a potentially brilliant book buried under a cascade of self-indulgent meandering prose. "Ira don't get advice from that kind of source that often," David says. "So I took a carving knife and leaped all over everything that didn't propel the plot forward." A year later a new version landed on

Clearly Davidson, 39, has inspired both sides of publishing's fissioned soul: the part longing for good literature and the part looking for the next *Die With Me* Cole. Anne Collins, publisher of the first house to buy rights, Random House Canada, and the novel's editor is "very happy" to have it. "The narrative voice was unput-downable, it made me not want this story a pornographer with no soul, who

It may well be that what Collins calls a "happy conjunction" of literary merit, trend and true fictional hooks and massive publicity will make *The Gargoyle* "sell, sell, sell." Bookdealers are inclined to agree the ghost-hunters' theme in the U.S. and Indigo here will both provide prominent placement at their storefronts. But it's book buyers who will make or break it as a commercial venture, and neither used publishers can only wait for their verdict. If anyone knew for sure what readers want, the *De Vries Code's* success would already be on the bestseller lists. ■

MARSH MIMULUS: B. with long dull, white, stout hair, a small nose, and the cheek somewhat enlarged & convex, with blue wrinkles, by



These 'special needs' toys have been called everything from 'sweet' to 'patronizing'

Deena Diment ordered Maddy's diet from Down's Cakes, a non-profit organization based in South Carolina that sells "colossal-quality" dolls online for US\$695. Deena Mente, Down's editor and CEO, says they've got "the 15 distinct features" associated with Down's syndrome, such as almond-shaped eyes, a single earlobe on the side, and a smaller-than-average "slightly protruding tongue." A small tear in the doll's chest represents heart surgery, which some children, like Maddy, undergo. According to the Canadian Down Syndrome Society, as per most of the aid in 100 people born with the syndrome have a heart defect.

Helen Parks, co-owner of Helen's European Specialty Toys, got the idea for Doll Don's syndrome dolls after seeing her mother, Anne, who has since died, play with them at her special-needs class in Gary, Indiana. "I could see that each child in a much better way than if you give them a Barbie," said Parks, who the phone from South Carolina, where her company is based. "These dolls actually improve the child's self-esteem—it gives them something to relate to." Parks recently started selling "Chemo Friends," which are bald dolls that have a little pony under their collar bones to remind the one some chemotherapy patients get, says Parks. "This would cost

Amber Boyd, executive director of Ups and Downs, a Calgary-based parent support organization, has a more practical reason for not buying one for her four-year-old daughter, Trinity, who has Down's syndrome. Boyd thinks that by the time Trinity is able to recognize the doll's differences, she'll probably be too old to play with one. ■

FINALLY, A BOOK ABOUT... EXECUTION IN FRANCE
According to Jeremy Meiser's *Execution: History of the death penalty in France, When the Guillotine Fell* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux), Guillotin was inspired by revolutionary ideals when he changed the way executions were carried out. A quick, merciful beheading! Not at all just a noble, was his aim. But contemporaries failed to agree. The guillotine's first use in 1793 angered spectators with its brisk efficiency, and they began chanting "Give me back my guillows!"

QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE

WHAT THEY GOT FOR IT... VICTORIA'S UNDERPANTS
Her essence graced a globe and now the underwear that graced her globe has been sold for \$1,000. Handmade underwear worn by Queen Victoria, ample enough to go around her 50-inch waist and manufactured "19" were sold at auction in English last week to Toronto royal memorabilia collector Barbara Busch. The knickers were made at the 1840s and sold for above their estimated price. Sold Busch "It's a wonderful find."

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

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now.MACLEAN'S
MAKE SENSE OF IT ALLScenes
from the
upcoming
Republican
conventionSCOTT
PERDUEThe four-day U.S. political
convention are fast ap-
proaching—and only Mac-
lean's has the exclusive de-
tails of the inside of John
McCain's big moment.

Day One

6:00 p.m. The Republican National Con-
vention begins with a series of localist ac-
tions, among them:

- Policy forum No. 1: Drilling in the Arctic, and how it's just America's way of showing Mother Nature we still find her attractive.
- Policy forum No. 2: The other side of the illegal immigration debate—so who does my pool man, Barack?

• Strategy session No. 3: Karl Rove's seminar for candidates: "How to get undecided voters to swing Republican highlanders, a closed-door and zoning food courts. Stop and remind them Obama is black."

9:00 Party officials unveil the 2008 Re-
publican party logo, a shortened tongue of
the Monopoly guy giving the finger to an orphan.

9:00 Keynote address: In an effort to make
the party more "accessible" to the average
voter, a permanent CEO will reveal how he
too has been affected by the recession—right
down to having to buy a high def TV in place
of a flat-screen TV he was going to personally
read the news.

Day Two

9:00 a.m. Some delegates meet in a gas-
turbine vehicle to find approval in both red and
blue states, among liberals and conservatives
like, within 100 to 1000 feet and a motorist
will be asked to move as soon as they are
told James Carville with their best hands.

7:30 p.m. A number of disaffected
Republican voters take the podium to tell
us how they feel about the economy and
the future of the country. In an effort to
show how they feel, they will be asked to
sing the national anthem.

8:30 John McCain's inaugural speech will
be given in the opportunity to address the coun-
try and effectively lay the groundwork for
future presidential bids. Fred Thompson
begins: "I'm here tonight to tell you what I
believe in, and I want to start with the yes."

9:30 Feeling no state, the TV networks
broadcast a cowboy show of the new African
American guy in the crowd for, like, the se-
venth time.

8:05 McCain arrives on stage to accept
his party's nomination. He becomes the first
Republican since Ronald Reagan to run for
the office in his seventies and the first since
James Garfield to evoke the memory of Ab-
raham Lincoln through personal anecdote.

10:15 McCain through his speech, an un-
precedented 15 minutes of McCain's
delights to "put the hell off my lawn."

10:30 "The newspapers tell me I'm weak."

8:30 p.m. Cheney's record is honoured with
the traditional '21 guns to the face' salute.

Day Three

9:00 p.m. Afternoon left open to delegates
can take advantage of Complimentary Mas-
sive Adjustment Day at Lencrofters.

8:45 With the party determined to win
over at least some Democratic supporters,
Rudy Giuliani and Mike Huckabee are war-
ned to ignore name. Huckabee is asked to
Nixon catches, and Larry chaps, the
bequest.

8:30 Dick Cheney's record of public ser-
vice is honoured with the traditional "21 guns
to the face" salute.

9:00 George W. Bush arrives to discuss of
"Four more years! Four more years!"—until
an usher tells Bill and Hillary to pipe down
to 45. At the end of his speech to delegates,
George W. Bush walks off stage and into the
history books of gross problems—what, in
retrospect, they would never have needed
so close to the stage.

Day Four

9:45 p.m. As has been political real-
ism, John McCain introduced with a cancer
resistance video. In an effort to portray
McCain as youthful, the video is a concep-
tion of the career of Matthew McConaughey.

ing my Democratic rival. The newspapers
will tell me that McCain's record has got
him an other spot of mischief. My fellow
Americans, I ask you, will that dog never
leave?"

8:05 McCain arrives at the climax of his
address: "We've heard a lot about change
but the truth is that this campaign has gone
on for so long that the brand of change ad-
vanced by my opponent has actually become
the status quo. And we all know the status
quo is always bad, so we must change first.
It. And the way to change from the change
that has become the status quo is to embrace
a new idea: the idea of change that moves
us forward while also taking us back. What
I'm saying, my fellow Americans, is that we
must go... back to the future!"

8:55 Introduces running mate, "Doc"
Romney.

10:15 Following the speech, and in keep-
ing with Republican tradition of "com-
municating conservatism," all delegates who
are sleeping in their chairs will be left there
for the night. ■

ON THE WEB: To read Perdue on the Internet
visit his blog www.mackinac.ca/perdue

SIDNEY HUGH WILLIS PAINE

1934-2008

He loved airplanes and cars. When his sister was born, he asked God for an Austin instead.

Sidney Hugh Willis Paine was born in Toronto on Oct. 3, 1934, to English immigrants Sidney, a plant manager, and Agnes, a homemaker. As a young child, Sid was infatuated with all things mechanical. In one well-loved family story, his sister Catherine remembers that Sid repeatedly stole the new car his mother was preparing. Then he asked for a baby brother and then amended the request. Says Gwen, who is seven years younger, "Mother heard him saying, 'Please God, may I have an Austin car?'" By the time the Second World War was raging and Sid often bicycled to Downsview airport to watch RCAF pilots landing and taking off, Sid was too young to fight, but he joined the Air Cadets and, after the war, he pursued his greater pilot's quest. At 17, Sid flew from Baltimore over the city of Toronto. But he said he wasn't as much worried about the danger. By the time he met his future wife, Barbara Harris, at a dance at the King Edward Hotel, he had quit flying for good.

Still, along with a love interest in sports, aviation remained one of Sid's lifelong loves. Before his wedding in 1964, he began a 32-year career at Air Canada (then called Trans-Canada Air Lines), scheduling its in-flight crews. He and Barbara had three children, Laura, Catherine and Stephen. The family moved from Toronto to Oakville and then to a brand new house in Mississauga to be closer to Sid's job at the Toronto international airport. Soon Sid was taking advantage of the company's employee discounts, flying the family to Jamaica, Bermuda, and New Jersey to visit Barbara's relatives.

In his mid-40s, Sid took up golf, becoming a member of the The Ridge Golf and Country Club, and making pilgrimages to St. Andrews in Scotland and Pebble Beach, Calif., eventually becoming a member of the Olney country where his sister-in-law, Jacqueline, played. He became an addict, says his daughter Catherine. "If he wasn't on his phone, he would walk golf on television. And if he wasn't watching it, he was practicing his swing in the basement or in the backyard." When he wasn't golfing, Sid was gardening, a passion he learned from his parents. On his big corner lot, he kept a massive garden that "vibrated people in their souls," Catherine says. He often spent 10 hours at a stretch, sometimes in the pouring rain, tending to every kind of fruit tree and flower,

and adding his prize-winning roses. "The most precious possession was his family," Gwen says. But his roses were a close second. And his cars were third. Sid was always careful to park the cars where they wouldn't be scratched, even if he had to walk long distances. Says Catherine, "He thought if he took good care of something, there was no reason why it shouldn't last forever."

Sid had what Gwen calls "a gift of the gab." Whenever he went, he made friends. After he took an early retirement from Air Canada in 1990, he got a job at the YMCA in Mississauga, handing out towels and tidying up the men's locker room. "For him it was a free membership," Catherine says. "And he met all these wonderful people who became his new friends." He was no great talker, neighbors said, but would follow them right into the showers to finish a long-stalled story. The only time the place was quiet was when he was in a bad mood. And that didn't happen much. Sid was such a natural-born talker that he even loved to entertain the family cat, Tia, and later Tia's, "Mother cat liked my father," Catherine says.

Growing older was something Sid tried to defy by exercising and eating light—try a bowl of prunes was a breakfast staple. And "he had a bucket list in his mind," Catherine's husband, Charles Austin Roberts, says. In his 60s, Sid took up a downhill skiing, in his 70s, skydiving, and, a month ago, gliding. But Charles saw his frustration. The two became golfing buddies about 18 years ago, playing different courses around Ontario. Sid refused to use a cart, even in his 80s, and he was never happy with his game. Even when he had a really good shot, Charles says, "He would say, 'I really didn't get a hold of this.' He wouldn't accept the fact that he couldn't hit the ball as far as he used to. He had a very competitive nature."

About three years ago, Sid bought a British racing green, 1990 Honda Motor. Barbara didn't like the sports car. Still, on Sat. July 16, she and he drove to a friend's birthday at the Danville Automobile, a private track on the north shore of Lake Erie. At 10:40 a.m., Sid won off the course and travelled about 300 m into the corner of a hangar belonging to the Danville airport, a place where RCAF fighter pilots trained during the Second World War. He died at the scene. He was 73.

BY BARBARA RICHYON

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